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LETTERS

FROM

MRS. ELIZABETH CARTER,

TO

MRS. MONTAGU,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1755 AND 1800.

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BETWEEN THE YEARS 1755 AND 1800.

CHIEFLY UPON LITERARY AND MORAL SUBJECTS.

NN-6-4

PUBLISHED FROM THE
ORIGINALS IN THE POSSESSION
OF THE
REV. MONTAGU PENNINGTON, M.A.
VICAR OF NORTHBOURN IN KENT, AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, DEAL, HER NEPHEW AND EXECUTOR.

Digni sunt amicitia, quibus in ipsis inest causa cur diligantur.
CIC. DE AMICIT.

Extremum hunc—mihi concede laborem.—VIRG.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, Bart.

K. J. and M. P. for Maidstone.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It ought not to surprize you, that I should send this work into the world, under the sanction of your name, although I have not thought proper to give you any intimation, that I designed to do myself that honor. For the high opinion which you have always expressed of the virtues

and talents of the Writer of these Letters, and the near relationship of your amiable and excellent Lady, to the distinguished character to whom they are addressed, obviously pointed out the propriety of inscribing them to you. Add to this, that it is in a great measure, owing to your friendship, and to the warm and kind interest which you have, for so many years, taken in all that relates to me, that I have been induced to undertake this task. Because, as I have hinted in another place, I have been principally guided by your judgment, in forming my estimate of the value of these Letters.

In making this use, however, of your name and high reputation in the literary world, I do not mean to shelter myself

under it, and to shrink from the responsibility attached to the office of an Editor. Unless my own opinion had coincided with your better judgment; unless I had been fully persuaded in my own mind, that this work would be well received by, and I hope useful to, the public, no other considerations should have tempted me to suffer it to appear. But I am aware, that the affectionate and grateful regard, which I bear to the memory of my honoured Relation, and my deep sense of the many obligations which I owe to her, might easily mislead my judgment; and I therefore wished for your opinion as to the propriety of this publication. Upon this, above all others, I desired to rely, for reasons which the world will easily guess and duly appretiate; though the delicacy of

warm and sincere friendship will not suffer me to enlarge upon them, nor your modest sense of your own learning, talents, and acquirements, permit you to allow.

Believe me,

With high regard and esteem,

My dear Sir Egerton,

Your sincere and obliged friend,

MONTAGU PENNINGTON.

Deal,
March, 1817.

PREFACE.

AFTER the publication of Mrs. Carter's Correspondence with Miss Talbot, and of her Letters to Mrs. Vesey, it may perhaps be proper to state the reasons which prevented the Editor from printing the present Collection of Letters before this time, and which have induced him to print them now. His intention was, not to publish any more of Mrs. Carter's Letters, because he thought those which were already in the hands of the public, were sufficiently voluminous, and gave a clear insight into her way of thinking upon a great variety of interesting and important subjects. But there has been so large a demand for the Letters already published, and they have been so much approved by those, whose opinion the Editor most regards, that he has

has been, for some time, doubtful of the propriety of his determination. It has been urged upon him, by those few friends who have been allowed to peruse, in manuscript, the Letters which are now submitted to the' public, (and more especially by one, highly valued and respected, from whose judgment upon every literary and moral subject there can scarcely lie any appeal) that their general tendency was so excellent; that many particular passages were so eminently beautiful; and that, considered altogether, they were so interesting, that they could do no discredit to the established reputation of the writer, and would probably make an addition to our domestic literature, both useful and entertaining. It has also been presumed that the high character and situation in society, of the Lady to whom these Letters are addressed, would give an encreased interest to the publication; for, as the Series is complete, they may serve, in some degree, as a memoir of the leading events of her life, from the date of their commencement.

Such

Such are the reasons which have induced the Editor to depart from his first intention, and to lay these Letters before the public. They must now stand or fall by their own merits. But of the manner in which he has performed his task of Editorship, it may be necessary to say a few words by way of apology. He has too much respect for the public, to urge his many avocations, in the situation in which he is placed, in extenuation of negligence or carelessness, if he should unfortunately be found guilty of offences of that nature; and, in that case, will rather throw himself upon the indulgence of his readers, than plead such an excuse. For if it were well founded, it should have prevented him from undertaking the task at all. But though a great deal of that continual reference to the health of the writer, which is pardonable, and indeed natural, in so intimate a correspondence, has been omitted; yet it may possibly be thought, that too much of it has still been allowed to remain. If the reader should be of that opinion, it can only be alleged in reply, that, in publishing letters, the

the epistolary form and manner must be preserved; that, in a long and affectionate friendship, such notices of the health of the writer are expected of course; and that, if every thing were to be expunged from letters, but disquisitions upon moral and religious subjects, the politics of the day, and opinions upon books, they would lose their chief interest: because that interest principally arises from the incidental mention of such topics, as they happen to come into the writer's mind, from the casual circumstances which had been before the subject of conversation, or from the varying chances of public or private events. The work would then be a collection of aphorisms, or opinions, which would be valuable certainly, in proportion to the character and abilities of the author, but which, having no connection with each other, would be reduced to the dryness of abstract truths. Instead of sentiments flowing immediately from the heart, uttered extemporaneously as the immediate occasion gave rise to them, they would appear to have been the fruit of study, and written on purpose

purpose for the press. They would lose what may be called that local and personal charm, which arises from their being identified with the two friends, in whom, it is hoped, the reader will take an interest*; and would be no more than any other moral or literary work of an author unconnected with the present age, and unknown to the present generation.

A similar apology may also be pleaded for the frequent mention of Mrs. Carter's own family. In a correspondence so long and unreserved, this must of course be expected to occur, and though very gratifying to the parties concerned, cannot be supposed to engage the attention of the public. The far greater part, therefore, of the anecdotes and account of the writer's family, has been

* "Movemur enim, nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis, in quibus eorum quos diligimus aut admiramur, adsunt vestigia. Me quidem ipsæ illæ nostræ Athenæ, non tam operibus magnificis, exquisitisque antiquorum artibus delectant, quam recordatione summorum virorum, ubi quisque habitare, ubi sedere, ubi disputare sit solitus." Cic.

omitted,

omitted, especially the frequent notices concerning the Editor in his youth, which, as he was Mrs. Montagu's godson, was a subject continually recurring in them. Still perhaps her own family may seem to occupy a larger portion of some of Mrs. Carter's Letters, than may be thought proper or necessary, even allowing for all the circumstances before mentioned. If this be so, the Editor must seek for pardon in the kindness of the reader; only observing that it may naturally be expected, that many things relating to his own family, and the occurrences which were familiar to his early days, may not strike him in the same light in which they may appear to the public. And though they may, perhaps very justly, think such circumstances superfluous and uninteresting, he has suffered them to retain their place in the Letters, because they did not seem such to him.

With respect to anecdotes of other families, or persons, they have been allowed to remain, wherever there was, so far as the Editor knew

or

or believed, no person living, whose feelings could be hurt, or whose reputation could be injured, by their publication. In some few cases, where the anecdote has been retained for the sake of the admirable reflections to which it gave rise, the name of the parties concerned has been omitted. In every instance, either of omission or of publication, the Editor has been conscientiously guided, by what he thinks would have been the wish of his venerable and respected relation herself. And no one who knew her, either personally or by character, can doubt her aversion to scandal, or her love of truth.

It may possibly be found that the dates of some few of the Letters are not quite correct; for some of them appear not to have been dated at all, probably from carelessness, and of some the dates have been accidentally torn off. These have been inserted, as nearly as could be discovered, in their proper places, but perhaps, in some instances, erroneously. Of the latter Letters also, in some few cases, two, or even more, have

have been joined together. As these were mostly very short, and nearly filled with references to the bad health and increasing infirmities of both parties, this was thought the best way of preserving some parts of them which ought not to be passed over, though too short to form a separate Letter.

In general, the Editor has been guided, in making his selection from these Letters, by the judgment of the same literary friend to whom he has before alluded, as communicated in a letter, from which, without his knowledge, he will take the liberty of making the following extract. "The latter Letters are, as might be expected, "less interesting than the early ones. Old age, "I presume, brought on a certain degree of "languor; and induced the writer to fill up her "pages more with common chit-chat, and to "avoid the attempt to develope deep and inte- "resting topics.

"What I consider most worthy of selection "are

" are opinions on books, life, and morals; and " even if a private character is drawn with " power, eloquence, and nicety of distinction, it " becomes valuable and instructive, though the " name may be but little known.

" The selection of that, which partakes of the " ordinary newspaper politics of the day, re- " quires great caution; but sometimes when it " helps to recall the series of public events to our " fading memories, and to impress upon us, of " what little comparative consequence, are many " circumstances, which filled people at the mo- " ment with fear and astonishment, it becomes " useful; and it is more amusing when it affords " us an opportunity of seeing such events and " circumstances registered in combination."

One more circumstance remains to be noticed, concerning which the Editor feels much greater diffidence, and stands in need, he fears, of all the reader's indulgence. He has ventured to add a few notes to the Letters, partly explana-

tory, and such as he hoped might add to their interest, and in some few instances critical. In these last, he has occasionally, though sparingly, indulged himself in references to, and quotations from, the delightful studies of his earlier days; delightful! not by comparison with the sublime objects, to which both his profession and inclination have long since led him to turn his thoughts and attention; nor even by their own intrinsic value confirmed by the voice of ages, so much as by their being associated in his mind with those youthful

> "Scenes whose pleasures fled too fast,
> "And hours most valu'd now they're past;"

on which the soberness of advanced years is but too apt to dwell with pleasure, though by no means to wish for their return. For those notes which have a higher tendency, and are designed to point out to the particular notice of the reader, some passages of superior importance in a religious point of view, the Editor hopes that no apology will be thought necessary. Those who

sit

sit down to the perusal of these Letters, with no view to moral, literary, or religious improvement, will certainly derive from them neither advantage nor pleasure; but he ventures to indulge the hope, that they will not be found wholly unprofitable, nor even devoid of rational amusement, by those who read them upon better and worthier principles. Whoever has known either the person, or the works, of the excellent and amiable writer of these Letters, will feel perfectly confident, that if the world is not bettered by their publication, it will, at least, not be injured; and that the whole of their general tendency, like that of the life of their author, must be the good of her fellow-creatures, and the glory of her Creator.

Let the Editor be permitted to add concerning himself; that in this, certainly his last publication upon this subject, and probably upon any other, for increasing years and increasing occupations steal something from his studies every day; he has not lost sight of that same great

principle,

principle, which has indeed hitherto guided his pen in every thing which he has written or published. Let him be allowed to say, with no dishonest pride, that he has never yet published a line which he could wish to obliterate; and that he has therefore the comfort of looking forward to a death-bed, not embittered by the thought, that he shall leave any thing behind him injurious to that society, which it is his, and every man's duty to endeavour to improve. So that if his humble talents have failed to make the world wiser or better, they have at least not been employed in doing it harm; neither disgraced by the propagation of falsehood or scandal, nor by the base attempt to make vice less odious, or religion less engaging.

LETTERS TO MRS. MONTAGU.

LETTER I.

Deal, *August* 14, 1756.

WITH half a ray of twilight, and the confusion of a head that has been past all day on a pillow, I am but ill qualified to answer your letter, my dear friend. I will however, at least thank you for it, for fear I should be prevented to-morrow, as probably some of them may come very early.

I was obliged to supply the deficiences of Tacitus by having recourse to Suetonius, whom one ought to respect, I believe, as a useful writer, though it is impossible not to grow tired of him as a very crabbed and disagreeable one. I join with you in regretting that we have lost the fine lurid picture which would have been drawn of this reign by the pencil of Tacitus. It is difficult to judge of two such monsters as Tiberius and Caligula, which was the most detestable; yet perhaps there seems to be rather more excuse for the wretch who discharged on mankind part of

the horrors that racked his own breast, than for the other, whose cruelties were a mere wanton sport, and were practised *con amore*. Whatever was the difference of their guilt, the self-tormenting turn that devoured the one, and the frolick devil that amused the other, were equal mischiefs to the Romans, though the last was the most insupportable, as misery must be aggravated by contempt.

I will make your compliments to Mrs. Underdown. She is returned from Wingham; Mrs. Douglas is gone there: and before the end of the summer, I must spend a few days there; so to be sure, you will think there is a marvellous friendship and alliance between the states of Deal and Wingham*.

The excursion you so kindly wished might be an agreeable one, has been most completely so. My friends took me with them when they went for a view of the Kentish coast, and have shewn me some parts of this charming country which I was a stranger to before. The road from Canterbury to Dover was quite new to me, and the prospects are extremely fine, one half through a country highly cultivated and flourishing, and

* Wingham House, half way between Sandwich and Canterbury, was then the seat of Lady Palmer, widow of Sir Thomas Palmer, Bart.

the

the other wildly and pleasingly romantic. However, as highly delighted as I am with this new discovery, it has by no means rivalled my favorite walks and prospects between Deal and Canterbury.

I am sorry to find that Miss Botham seems to have received so little benefit from Bristol. It often happens however, that the effect of the waters is more sensibly felt after some time than upon the spot, and I wish there may be an instance of it in her case. I beg my compliments to her.

I hope by Mr. Isaacson's completing his part, your affairs are now entirely settled in the colliery, &c. Are you to go into Northumberland this year?

Your Augustus would not have been the tool of Livia, if he had not been the slave of his own passions. A wise and great man who is seduced by the artifices of a bad woman, with whom he was originally connected in a fair and honest way, may be a pitiable instance of human weakness. But the marriage of Augustus with Livia, was in itself an act of injustice, and a wicked outrage on all the rights of civil life *.

Your

* The marriage was in every way disgraceful. Augustus, himself the husband of Scribonia, fell in love with Livia, the wife of Tiberius Nero, and at that time far advanced in her

 pregnancy

Your meditations, *sub dio*, I imagine must have been interrupted by this alteration of weather; I hope you find no other inconvenience from it. It cripples me from head to foot with the rheumatism; I hope to be repaid for it when the weather becomes practicable, by finding the fields brightened into a new verdure.

Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER II.

Deal, *July* 13, 1758.

NOTWITHSTANDING all your present incumbrances, you must give me leave, dear Madam, very sincerely to rejoice in the news you are so good to send me. It is no wonder that you have hitherto found nothing very cheering in this "cup of fortune." The first bustle and hurry renders the draught a little turbid; but when it comes to be perfectly well settled, I hope

pregnancy by him. Augustus divorced Scribonia, even during her confinement in child-bed, and married Livia, who had also been divorced by Nero for that purpose, without even waiting for her delivery. And her son Drusus, by Nero, was born about three months after her marriage with Augustus.

you

you will find it mighty drinkable and good. After all, though riches may be useless or mischievous implements in the hands of avarice and folly, to a right turned mind they are a very real and important blessing; and may you long enjoy every advantage they are capable of bestowing!

I hope taking a long journey is good for your health; I wish you had informed me it is, when you told me you were to travel two hundred and eighty miles. It is merely to entitle myself to the performance of your promise of writing to me, when you are got to the end of your journey, that induces me to take a pen in my hand, when my spirits are so low that I find great difficulty in making use of it. In answering some enquiries you once kindly made about my family, I believe I told you how happy my brother * was in a wife. That happiness, alas! is no more, to the inexpressible affliction of us all; he has lost her at three and twenty! Youth, health, gay spirits, an easy fortune, uncommon accomplishments of person and understanding, a husband of her own choice,

* Her eldest brother, John Carter, Esq. of Deal; a gentleman who, to the most brilliant talents and first-rate abilities, added all the advantages which science, joined with deep and extensive learning, could give. The lady here mentioned, his first wife, was sole daughter and heiress to John Underdown, Esq. of Deal.

and

and who loved her with the most excessive degree of affection, seemed to open the fairest prospects of life before her; and one is foolishly apt to increase the bitterness of grief, by indulging such considerations as these! but they are wrong, and ought to be suppressed. That Providence which looks at one view through every circumstance of our existence, determines certainly with infinite wisdom and goodness, the proper hour of its change. Yet with the most entire implicit resignation to the dispositions of Heaven, human weakness will suffer, and we are allowed to feel those sorrows

> "Which He who could the world controul,
> Did not disdain to bear."

My own loss by this event is not merely that of a sister-in-law. She was the only child of my most intimate friend in this place, and I have had a constant connection with her, ever since she was born. Yet, what is my loss, compared with that of her husband and her mother! As I spend the greatest part of every day with her, my mind is so perpetually full of one sad subject, that it is difficult for me to turn my thoughts to any other, which I hope will be an excuse for my saying so much about it to you. You will feel some good-natured concern for my present melancholy situation;

tion; but I hope it is for my good. Such events are designed to convey very important lessons, which if they are properly attended to, must render one the wiser and better, and consequently in the end, infallibly the happier.

I am glad our friend Emin * is returned in safety. I cannot help wishing him, if our own army is not a proper school, with Prince Ferdinand, who, if what the papers say of him be true, appears to be perfectly a Christian hero.

The most sensible pleasure I have in the favorable reception given to Epictetus, is by considering it as a proof that people in general are pleased with a well-meant endeavour to promote the cause of Christianity †, and those who have never given themselves time to listen to better arguments, may be tempted, by the influence of fashion, to consider these. I may be allowed too, I hope, to be agreeably affected by the good-natured pleasure which any little degree of reputation

* For an account of this Armenian hero of romance, see the Editor's Preface to the Letters between Mrs. Carter and Miss Talbot. He did afterwards serve under Prince Ferdinand. He died at Calcutta, in 1810.

† For the manner in which Mrs. Carter attempted to carry this excellent design into execution, in her translation of Epictetus, the reader must be referred to her own admirable Preface to that work, and to the Letters between her and Miss Talbot.

this work has met with, gives to my friends. I am more happy in the permission you give me to consider you in this number, than I have at present spirits to tell you, and can only add the assurance of my being, with sincere esteem and affection,

Dear Madam, &c.

P. S Remember you are to write to me when you are got into the North, and I hope by that time to receive a better account of your health.

LETTER III.

Deal, *August* 18, 1758.

You must, I fear, have thought me strangely insensible, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to the favour of a letter by which I, in reality, felt myself so much obliged. But indeed, though I have every day longed to thank you for it, a wretched indolence has continually furnished me with excuses for putting it off. The strong wish of hearing from you again, has at last broken the charm, and I am determined no longer to forbear entitling myself to the hope of knowing how you

go on in that strange distant region, to which I imagine you are by this time transported. Pray are not you within the arctic circle, and is not the pole star directly over your head? Poor soul! how is it possible that you who, even in London, used to wish for the warm suns of Italy, should be able to subsist in such a frozen climate! But perhaps you keep yourself from absolute petrifaction by the delectable exercise of bear-hunting. I know not whether it is usual to put bears in a mew, but if you should keep any by you, I shall be obliged to you for a cub, which I should greatly prefer, as the more stoical animal, either to a monkey or a parrot.

Would you not imagine by all this idle stuff that I was in very good spirits? Helas! I wish I could say, I had exactly followed the perfectly right advice which you so kindly gave me, of using a good deal of exercise. The great uncertainty of the weather has often served me as an excuse for neglecting it, though I am sensible that this is a circumstance which, in a more cheerful temper, I should not have regarded; but, in some dispositions, every shower appears a deluge, and every zephyr a storm. However, I have lately walked a good deal, and hope to be the better for it, but at present there is such a

dead

dead weight upon my heart, as checks every effort I make use of to raise my spirits. Yet I hope I am perfectly sensible of the innumerable blessings I enjoy, and that I entirely acquiesce in the disposition of Providence with regard to that event which I feel with so painful a sensibility *. That very sensibility, I am persuaded is for my good. I have naturally a strange foolish infantine fondness for life, and am extremely apt to be pleased, and play myself asleep with trifles; and this idle careless disposition needs some strong awakening stroke to excite it to more important pursuits and better expectations. My health, of which you kindly desire an account is, I thank God, much as usual.

I heartily congratulate you on the pleasure you received by seeing Mrs. Scott †, and the good effect it had on your health. May this and every other blessing be long continued to you! I am greatly obliged to her for the honour she does me, and beg you will be so good to present my compliments and thanks to her. I find myself very happy in the thought of your representing me to her in the character of your friend, and am perfectly sensible in how advantageous a light this circumstance must make me appear to her.

* The death of her brother's wife before-mentioned.

† Sister to Mrs. Montagu.

I hear

I hear our Armenian hero* is gone to gather laurels in the army of Prince Ferdinand, and heartily wish him good success. I find people are uneasy for our forces at Louisbourg, which I feel not only with the concern of an English-woman, but am particularly sorry for Mrs. Boscawen's† situation, because she is your friend. After all, if one was to judge without prejudice, what business have either French or English in that country? I have just finished Ant. Solis's History of the Conquest of Mexico, which, in spite of all the favorable representations which a very sensible writer could make of this exploit, has filled me with horror. If the affair was not too serious and important for ridicule, one should laugh very heartily at the solemn encomiums which Solis gives his countrymen, whenever they tore down some idol of the Indians, and set up an image of their own in its room.

I hope you will soon give me the pleasure of hearing you are perfectly well, and that you sometimes bestow a thought on,

Dear Madam, &c.

* Emin. See note to the preceding Letter.

† Wife of Admiral Boscawen, who commanded the fleet upon that occasion.

LETTER IV.

Deal, *November* 1, 1758.

I WILL not attempt, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to describe what I felt on reading your letter. If you think justly either of yourself or me, you must easily guess in what manner I was affected by it. Alas, while I was often pleasing myself in imaginary conversations with you, I little suspected the danger I was in of losing all hope of their ever becoming real! Yet there is always reason to be apprehensive for a life like yours, when one considers how often that observation is verified in a general sense, which Tacitus makes on the favorites of a particular people—*breves et infausti generis humani amores* *: a melancholy event, but whenever it happens, ordered no doubt with a gracious intention, in a

* "*Sed breves semper et infausti populi Romani amores.*" Mrs. Carter's attention, when she wrote this letter, seems to have been wholly occupied with her friend's recent danger, and she thought not of the latinity of the passage which she applies from Tacitus. It would otherwise have been very gratifying to have had the opinion of so critical and excellent a scholar, upon the nice question, whether the word *amores* be admissible as good Latin, in the sense in which the author uses it.

state

state which admits only of imperfect wisdom and virtue, and in which distinguished excellence and its necessary consequence, general esteem and affection, are such powerful temptations to the giddy constitution of the human heart; temptations however, with which all who know you must wish you may have yet many years to struggle, and against which you are armed with the only principles by which they can be subdued. Providence, I hope, has restored you to your friends, and withdrawn you from the borders of the grave, to a long enjoyment of every blessing this world has to bestow, and to a long exercise and the highest improvement of every virtue that can increase your happiness in a better! Mr. Montagu, I hope, is sufficiently recovered from the alarm which your danger must have given him, to be sensible to the redoubled joy which arises from a blessing, which had been given over as lost. I cannot help hoping, that this terrible accident, by an operation more violent than any physician would have ventured to prescribe, may have produced such a change of constitution, as to render your health more strong and constant than it was before.

I heartily condole with you on the loss of your house-keeper; you deserved such a treasure as a faithful servant, by knowing how to set the

proper value on it. There would be many more probably of the same character as you describe, if their superiors had generosity enough to consider them, as you do, in a proper light. One too often sees people act as if they thought the dependance was wholly on one side, and as if they had no idea that the several relations of life consist in a mutual aid, and reciprocation of benefits.

I am much obliged to you for the honor you have done my favorite Livy, by so charming and so just a picture of him. The genius of Greece is equally indebted to your description, which one would think had been composed on the banks of Hyssus, rather than on those of the Tyne.

The course of my reading has lately been interrupted by two or three little excursions to Canterbury, which I made rather from principle than inclination, though there are several people there whom I esteem and love. My spirits have been so shocked and depressed by this melancholy summer, that I thought it right to take any opportunity of varying the scene, that properly fell in the way, though my inclination very strongly opposed it. Reading was the amusement which I found best suited to my indolent state of mind, and it served as an opiate to some painful subjects of my thoughts. But, like other opiates, I per-

ceived it was taking a fatal effect, and I found it quite necessary to endeavour to rouse myself. I have accompanied my brother, or rather he has been so good to accompany me, in three or four of these little journies, and I hope we are both the better for them. We have seldom been absent for above one night; yet this has broke in upon the regular track of some weeks, and put me quite out of method, which I do not regret because I believe it is much better for me. I have read but very little lately, and that has been chiefly Mezerai, who appears to me most lamentably dull. One derives, however, one consolation from most modern histories, that the world is better than it was twelve or fourteen centuries ago. Christianity seems to be much more fully understood, and better practised now, than it was in the infancy of Christian states; and though, to the scandal of the religion of peace, ambition still makes so much havock in the earth, there is certainly less personal cruelty and injustice, than when it was supposed that the murder of a rival or a brother, was to be expiated by building a monastery.

I shall be heartily glad to hear you are got to London, as I think you will be more likely to recover your health there, than in the frozen regions of the North. I hope you will make me

happy

happy by the knowledge of your being got safely there, as soon as you can write without fatigue. I have little or no prospect of coming to town this winter: but I feel a very sensible pleasure in the honor you do me, by kindly expressing a wish to meet me there. I found myself too tenderly interested in the account you gave me of the situation you had been in, to be able to delay writing till after your return from the North, and assuring you of the joy I feel on your recovery from so alarming a danger. A life like your's is of extensive concern; but very particularly important to one engaged by so many instances of kind regard, as you have had the goodness to discover for,

Dear Madam, &c.

LETTER V.

Deal, *January* 13, 1759.

You flatter my vanity very agreeably, dear Madam, by expressing a desire of hearing from me soon: and I should have writ still sooner than I do; if I had not been prevented by an untoward head which is mighty apt to frustrate

many

many an honest intention of my heart. Indeed I have every day longed to return you my sincerest thanks for so many obliging expressions of affection and friendship as you honour me with in your letter, yet very highly as I esteem every instance of regard which you are so good to express for me, I feel a real mortification in the reflexion that it is to the too advantageous idea you have formed of me, and not to what I really am, that I am indebted for a happiness to which I have no pretence from any such excellence, as you kindly suppose me to be possessed of. Indeed I do not deserve one half of the fine things which you say, I believe very sincerely, as they are addrest to the picture which your vivid and good natured imagination has drawn of a very defective original *. If I have any qualifications that intitle me to a share in your esteem and affection, as some I hope I have, I owe them entirely to my being a Christian: some of the least evils perhaps that would have discovered themselves in my composition was I any thing else, are, that I should have been a stoic, a metaphysi-

* By those who did not know Mrs. Carter, this may possibly be considered as an affectation of modesty; but the Editor would not suppress the passage because he is sure that those who did know her, will be of a very different opinion.

cian, a bear, and a wit *. Do not be frighted; I am no such beast at present: and I do not disavow your favourable opinion so much from any great harm in me, as that I am not half so wise and good as you suppose, and as I heartily wish to be. Then why do not you set about it, fool, Epictetus would say—very true, and I will see what can be done—In the mean time, my dear Mrs. Montagu, can you condescend to love a very moderate share of merit, upon the terms of finding much to overlook and forgive! If so, I shall be happy in your friendship, otherwise, alas! I can have no claim to it—I am vexed and ashamed of saying so much upon a subject so insignificant as myself; but I cannot bear you should be deceived, and think more highly of me than I deserve. I am unreasonable enough to wish you to be convinced of my faults and follies, and yet to continue to love me in spite of them all. Such indeed in some degree must be the condition of

* This passage, if Mrs. Carter may be supposed to have known herself, (the rarest of all knowledge) gives us a curious insight into her natural character. It will remind the classical reader of what Socrates, the best and wisest of all the heathen philosophers said of himself. And it is very consonant to Mrs. Carter's piety, as expressed to the very close of her life, to ascribe every good quality that she possessed, to the influence of the Christian Religion.

all mortal friendships, but I am sensible that I stand in need of some particular indulgence.

What shall I say to the reasons which you so kindly urge for my coming to town this winter. Though I confess that as you suspect, the wicked enchantress Indolence has too strong an influence over me, I would break through that charm, if it was all that kept me here, it would be strangely stupid in me not to love London, as the only place where I shall have an opportunity of seeing many friends to whom I am very highly obliged, and from whom I am sure to receive so much improvement and pleasure. But unluckily (I am going to trust you with one of my follies) I can have no enjoyment of London unless I am in a lodging, and that would be a greater expence than it would at present be prudent for me to indulge myself in. I honestly own I have refused two invitations; one, as I should be at a greater distance from you than I was before, you will not so much regret—forgive the vanity of an expression which you authorize me to use; the other pretty near you, from a person whom I love and esteem, and with whom I might have all the liberty that a more reasonable creature would desire. But my spirit of liberty is strangely untractable and wild; I must have something like a home; somewhere to rest an aching head with-

out giving any body any trouble; and some hours more absolutely at my own disposal than can be had in any other situation. In the necessary articles of life, to submit with tranquillity and good humour to unavoidable inconveniences is equally one's interest and duty; but in matters of mere pleasure and superfluity, one may be as delicate and whimsical, where nō body is hurt by it, as one pleases. I should not have given you such a long detail of my reasons, if you had not expressed yourself on this subject in a manner so obliging, that it would have looked like an ungrateful kind of sullenness to tell you *tout court*, that I could not come; though perhaps I have done myself no great credit by my explanation, unless you have great toleration for the perverseness of an independent spirit.

I will not trouble you for the fashionable French quarto, as from your description of it, I believe it would do me no manner of good. Too many of the French writers I fear are of the same character as you represent this to be: they affect to introduce a kind of gay morality so tricked out in plumes and clinquant, that an incautious reader will not presently discover, that all this finery is merely to disguise a system of wickedness and infidelity. I am heartily sorry to find that your health still needs some particular attention. You

have

have certainly great merit in submitting to the prescription of indolence. Indeed one can scarcely imagine how such an active spirit as yours can comply with such a regimen, unless Dr. Mousey * has put you into a bottle hermetically sealed.

Have you seen any thing of Miss Talbot this winter? If you have, be so good to mention her when you write and tell me how she looks. I fear her recovery goes on very slowly; and that she represents the state of her health to me in a more favourable way, than it may appear to be in, to any of her friends.

You are very good in being so kindly solicitous about the state of my mind, after the great shock it has felt this year. Indeed my health and spirits have been much more affected than I have ever discovered: and it is very lately that I thought I must have been under a necessity of trying what change of air and situation would do. But for this last fortnight I am, I thank God, greatly mended, and with time I hope all will grow still better. I have been perhaps the worse from this long season of wet weather, which puts a check to my walks. When may one hope to

* That well known eccentric physician was a very intimate friend of Mrs. Montagu.

see

see my Lord Lyttelton's History*? I fear not this winter, or you would have mentioned it. The next letter you favour me with, will I hope give me the pleasure of knowing your health is in a more confirmed state. For this, and every other happiness you have the most sincere wishes of

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER VI.

Deal, *January* 31, 1759.

Such a letter as I lately had the pleasure of receiving from you dear Madam, ought to be acknowledged by the very first post: but if you have heard of Miss Talbot's illness, you will easily guess what must have been the situation of my mind, and a heart like yours must I am

† This work was not published till 1764. See a curious, but not a very flattering account, of the manner in which it was printed and published, in Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets. The unhandsome and flippant manner in which Dr. Johnson treated that excellent and amiable nobleman, in that work, gave Mrs. Montagu, who had the highest esteem and value for him, great and deserved offence.

persuaded

persuaded readily excuse this omission. The melancholy occasion I have mentioned, has determined me in spite of all objections to come to London.

When I wrote to you last, I thought my having refused an invitation which I mentioned to you, had put it out of my power with any tolerable civility to come to town this winter; or I believe I should not have explained myself so fully as I did. Forgive me this honest confession? If I esteemed and loved you less than I do, I should have much less delicacy about being obliged to you. Does this need any explanation? If it does, when I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will endeavour to explain it.

I beg you to believe I very sensibly feel your goodness for me, and though I can by no means think of putting you to all the trouble you kindly propose to take about me if I come to London, I will give you enough for any reasonable person: and the more effectually to that purpose I very gladly subscribe to your scheme of a lodging in the environs of Hill-street *, if you will be so good as to let your house-keeper inquire for some sober quiet family where I may have one neat decent room, besides that which I am

* Where Mrs. Montagu resided.

to

to sleep in, which is all I shall want for a month, and I will be ready to take possession of it about the 14th or 15th of February; if no place is to be met with in your neighbourhood, I will not give you the trouble of any farther inquiry, as there are several people I can apply to in other parts of the town. not far distant from you, though I know not any body to address myself to immediately near Hill-street. When I am once settled, I shall shift extremely well; the thought of your being perplexed every day to think of a dinner for me, frightens me out of my wits. Besides, whenever I dine by myself, I revel in cake and tea, a kind of independent luxury in which one needs very little apparatus, and no attendants; and is mighty consistent with loitering over a book. But though I renounce all manner of dishes and covers, which would really be only an incumbrance and puzzle to me; I will very gladly be indebted to you for a more important entertainment, whenever you are so good as to give me an opportunity to converse with you, which will make me as happy as I am capable of being, in my present situation. I am very sensible that in my most advantageous dispositions I must always converse with you upon unequal terms; and I must now very particularly depend on your good nature, to engage you sometimes to bestow an hour upon her

her whom you will probably see with distracted thoughts, and sinking spirits. Miss Talbot's friendship has been one of the most distinguishing blessings of my life, God grant I may find her health in a better state, than I have at present reason to apprehend. At all events I shall be easier in London than I am here, I shall have a better opportunity of knowing how she does, than I can by any representations at this distance: and in whatever state I find her, it will I believe, be more supportable to me than the reflection that if I do not come, I may perhaps never see her more. She knows nothing of my intention of coming to town nor do I design to mention it, till I am fixed on a lodging. I ought I believe to make many apologies for giving you the trouble of getting one procured for me, and I really am quite ashamed to do it; yet after so many obliging expressions in your letter, I feared it would not discover a sufficient confidence in your goodness for me, if I first wrote to any body else.

I will be obliged to you as often as your convenience and my own conscience will suffer me, for your coach, principally to convey me to yourself and to Miss Talbot. You are extremely good in so kindly providing for my improvement and amusement by the books you mention: indeed I have more particulars to thank you for than

than I have at present either time or spirits to enumerate, and I can only assure you of my being with the deepest gratitude,

Dear Madam, &c.

LETTER VII.

Newbury, *March* 13, 1759.

We are now advanced a step farther on our journey, and I thank God very prosperously, Miss Talbot bears it very well, and I flatter myself grows rather better by it. She sleeps well; the fever is not at all increased; and she coughs much less frequently than she did, and is generally in good spirits, which are not wasted by talking, for she is kept extremely quiet, and scarcely ever suffered to speak.

The road which we have hitherto past is, I think, the best I ever saw, and the prospects on each side very fine: yet I am perpetually apt to say to myself *this* after all, is not *Kent;* and so I should say, and say it with a sigh, if I was travelling through the Vale of Tempe.

It seems an immense time, since I have heard any thing of you my dear Mrs. Montagu; after being

being accustomed to the expectation of seeing you every day, (how much do I owe you for accustoming me to it,) there are some hours in which I feel strangely vacant, at finding I know no more about you, than if I was in another planet. If you are at all sensible, how much I have set my heart upon finding a letter from you when I get to Bristol, I am sure you have too much good nature to disappoint me.

I longed for you extremely the other night at Reading, to ramble by moonlight amongst the ruins of an old abbey; you will be sensible this wish expresses more than a thousand speeches, if you consider how few people one would chuse for companions in such a scene; and therefore I deferred my expedition till the next morning, when I knew I should be less delicate in the choice of my company. There are many very good sort of folks whom one may tolerate, and even be mighty well pleased with in broad sunshine, who would be quite insufferable by moonlight.

Marlborough, *March* 13.

We reached this place about three o'clock; Miss Talbot is I fear rather more fatigued by this day's journey than the last. Her spirits were a good deal hurt by some terrors about the hill, which

which is just at the entrance of the town; and that I believe is the reason of her not being quite so well. A good night's rest, which I thank God she generally enjoys, will I hope set all right by to morrow morning. Whether this hill be really formidable or not, I cannot very well judge, as I was so solicitous about her, that I know not much of it. Our road to day has been equally good, I believe with the rest; but the country much less agreeable than any we have past through before. So far as I have yet been able to judge, Marlborough Mount by no means answers the fine description one had heard of it. I have been trying to get to the top of it, but in the spirit of blundering have only made myself giddy, without gaining any height. The country so far as I have yet been able to see, is low and flat and marshy. The house * I consider with great respect and veneration, not without a strong mixture of regret, that what was once the elegant abode of virtue and genius, and honoured by the conversation of the Duchess of Somerset † and Mrs. Rowe, should now resound with all the dis-

* Once the seat of the Duchess of Somerset.

† This lady is perhaps better known by her earlier title, of Countess of Hertford. See some letters from her to Mrs. Carter, in Mrs. Carter's Memoirs. Her friendship for Mrs. Rowe, is well known.

orderly

orderly and riotous clamour of an inn; and yet its fate is more eligible than that of Percy Lodge, as it stands the chance of receiving indifferently, good and bad people; and is not destined to the constant reception of shocking profligate vice.

Wednesday Morning.

Miss Talbot, I thank God, has had a very good night, so I hope she is not hurt by yesterday's journey. Adieu! My head aches too much to suffer me to add any more, than the assurance of my being ever

Your most obliged, &c.

P. S. Will you be so good to present my compliments to Lady Frances Williams and Mrs. Trevor; as I owe the honor of being introduced to their notice, entirely to you, I shall depend upon you, for preserving me alive in their memory, to which I have an excellent claim, while I am so happy to be considered as your friend.

LETTER VIII.

Bristol, *March* 31, 1759.

It was not the fault of my heart but of my head, which deprived me of the pleasure of writing to you by the last post; it confined me the whole day yesterday to a pillow, and absolutely forbid me the use of pen, ink, and paper, which I had placed within my reach, in the hope that, after some hours' quiet, it would grow more tractable; but after some struggles, I was obliged to give it over. Now, was not here a strong temptation for me to quarrel and fight with this worthless head, which prevented me from thanking you for a letter, in which you did it so much honor? No; that very letter was its security; your taking it under your protection, and representing it as your property, made it impossible for me not to treat it with gentleness and care.

We arrived safely, God be thanked, after a very prosperous journey, to this place, on Saturday afternoon. Miss Talbot is, upon the whole, I hope, the better for the exercise and change of air; and I am apt to think, would have received greater benefit from it, if it had not been for some terrors which the weakness of her spirits made

made her constantly liable to upon the road. What a striking contradiction are any fears in a character like hers, to the fine maxim, that virtue is its own reward. Reason surely must convince her, that no harm can possibly befall her *, whose whole life is governed by principles which have a constant claim to the divine favor and protection; yet what signifies this conviction to her *present* happiness, when all its influence is counteracted by weak nerves and fluttering pulses! These constitutional evils have no cure but in the regions of immortality.——To what a train of

* This is surely false reasoning, and very unlike the general turn of Mrs. Carter's correctly religious sentiments. If virtue be its own reward, it is certainly not by exempting us from the common sufferings of a probationary state. When the Apostle said, *Who is he that shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good*, no reference was meant to the usual evils of mortal life, but to the punishments inflicted by the laws upon *evil doers*, from which they would be exempt who were *followers of that which is good*. Weakness of nerves, and the depression of spirits, which generally attends a long illness, do not shew the want of religious principle. And they who humbly hope to "claim the divine favor and protection" in a future state, have no right to expect any particular interposition of Providence in their favor in this. The whole train of thought is more Stoical than Christian; yet probably Mrs. Carter's meaning was merely that Miss Talbot, after a well-spent life, ought to have no fear of death; but it is inaccurately expressed.

thinking

thinking in my present situation, would this consideration lead me! I will pursue it no farther.

A thousand thanks to you, my dear Mrs. Montagu for both your letters: you cannot, yes surely, you must imagine what good they have done me. You make me extremely happy by the assurance that, in spite of that strange wicked threatening, with which you terrified me, you are determined to love me; indeed you may, with all possible safety to yourself; I have no painful excellence, alas, to give you any particular apprehension about me! and I shall owe great part of your affection to the generosity of your own heart. It is certainly one of the best-natured—and in some cases, one of the most laudable—arts of a great mind, to give consequence to insignificant things; and it is very seldom that I have felt myself of so much importance as in finding *you* afraid of me.

O dear! instead of conversing at the distance of a hundred miles, you and I should have been sitting *tête-a-tête*, and we should have been the quietest, prettiest, properest company for each other imaginable, for I have been exactly in the state which you describe, and I value myself upon thinking that you have not a friend in the world, who in this instance, could so perfectly have suited your disposition. What a number of sub-

jects should we have discussed, that never entered into the heads of people who are sick of no other distemper but the vertigo of the world! I must have insisted that nobody should have been admitted to the tea-table but ourselves; and that your porter should have had strict orders to bar the passage with a *procul este profani* to all folks made up merely of flesh and bones, and strangers to the sensibilities and refinements of weak nerves. —Heigh ho!

Well but seriously, my dear Mrs. Montagu, I hope your complaints have been merely nervous, and such as I may reasonably expect, that if you have no other, you may struggle with at least to the end of the century. You are too well recovered by this time, I hope, to quarrel with me for such a wish: but however it may appear to you, I am sure it is a very good wish for the world, and of most particular importance to myself, if I happen to live on some years longer. This I do verily think may probably be the case, for all my head aches, pretty little fevers, tremors, &c. unless you exert your influence over me so strongly as to tempt me to hurry upon some unnatural death, from the machinations of physic. Indeed I do perfectly comply with the spirit of your advice, however I may seem lite-

rally to act against it, for I am really very careful of my health, and upon that principle, exceedingly afraid of a doctor. I should be very sorry to express any insolent contempt of a profession which is in several cases, I believe, very beneficial to mankind: but in such little chronical disorders as seem to be merely parts of a constitution, medicines surely can never do any good, and most commonly do a great deal of hurt: they are at least hurtful in one instance, that they weaken the spring of the mind, and fret the temper by the teazing exercise of perpetually disappointed hopes. Do not conclude me obstinate upon mere theory, without any experience what is in the power of medicines to effect: this is far from being the case, for I have formerly taken a great many, and remember the time when I considered every new prescription as a certain method of cure*. In a few years I discovered the fallacy, and ever since, instead of wearying myself to acquire that perfection of health, which was not in my power, I set myself to endeavour after the contentment which *is*, and I thank God, I am very well satisfied with that portion of ease

* This may remind the reader of Dr. Last's comforting his patient, by telling him that he was, "in a few days, coming out with a new medicine."

and comfort which, upon the whole, I am favored with*; and without regretting the want of such an absolute freedom from pain and languor as my constitution is, I believe, incapable of.

There is but little company yet arrived here: however enough to furnish one with some amusement, perhaps more than if the number was greater, though to say truth, I do sometimes like a crowd. I have hitherto fallen desperately in love with nobody but a dumb captain, for saying the wisest thing I have yet heard uttered in the room. As I am very desirous of retaining my passion for him, I shall be careful not to say any wise thing in my turn that might put an end to my said passion, by making him in love with me.

Mrs. and Miss Talbot charge me not to forget their best compliments. We go on, I thank God, extremely well; and I am so happy as to see Miss Talbot very evidently growing better, and possibly her recovery might advance still faster, if the Archbishop was perfectly well, as I hope he soon will.

Well, now indeed I have been very good, and Miss Talbot owns I have been very good, and so must you, or I will not be good another time. I have consulted Mr. Ford, and he has taken away some of my blood, and more of my spirits. How-

* How happy would it be for all constitutional invalids, if they could reason and feel so justly!

ever, I am persuaded it was quite necessary, and so I bear this temporary dejection, very contentedly.

I hope you will soon give me the pleasure of hearing you are quite recovered from the unclever state you were in when you writ last. Is your cough and hoarseness quite gone, and have you done growing thin? I know you must have nervous complaints, and it cannot be helped; but it is no necessary consequence of weak nerves, that you are to vanish into air. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu. Every happiness attend you.

Your's most faithfully, &c.

P. S. Have you any intelligence to give me of our Armenian hero?

LETTER IX.

Bristol, *April* 23, 1759.

It is surely a strange kind of busy life one passes in this place, where there seems to be no one earthly thing to do. Indeed, my dear Mrs. Montagu, I have been thinking of answering your very kind letter, every day since I received it, and every day I have found it was, by

some means or other, impracticable. There is something in this strange frippery way of squandering one's hours which, in one view, appears vexatiously trifling and unprofitable, yet taken in the true light, it is certainly, upon proper occasions, as much a part of life, as more serious and important-looking employments. One may keep living on to equal purpose, in every variety of external circumstances, provided they be such as naturally arise from one's situation. I believe it is much oftener our pride than our virtue, which is hurt, by a submission to what we are apt to deem trifles. We are led to form much too magnificent ideas of our own powers of action, and by this means, to overlook, with a foolish contempt, the proper occasions for exercising them. It is not in the study of sublime speculations, nor amidst the pompous scenery of some imaginary theatre of action, that the heart grows wiser, or the temper more correct. It is in the daily occurrences of mere common life, with all its mixture of folly and impertinence, that the proper exercise of virtue lies. It is here that the temptations to vanity, to selfishness, to discontent, and innumerable other unwarrantable affections arise; and there are opportunities for many a secret conflict with these in the most trifling hours, and it is our own fault if the business of life is ever at a stand. It is not

for

for your edification but my own, that I have been making all these wise reflections; indeed they are mighty wholesome and good for me, and the setting them down, helps to make me heartily ashamed of ever fretting that I can very seldom get half an hour to look into a book, nor ever five minutes to converse with Miss Talbot.

You bid me get acquainted with Mrs. Spencer*, which, I believe, I never promised to attempt, as I thought it might be a task of amazing difficulty; but she was so good to render it extremely easy, and I have been at least as much pleased with her, as you foretold I should be; so much that I heartily regret her leaving Bristol; for, alas! she is gone, and with her, the whole spirit of the room, at least to me, who am not likely to get into such an easy way of conversing with any body else. The company daily increases; and, I am afraid, will soon grow formal and uncomfortable; hitherto all has been easy and unceremonious. Do you know Lady Harriet Roper, and Lady Catharine Murray? They have been here about a week, and by what I have seen of them, they are very clever and agreeable. I believe there might be many subjects of entertainment to be found at the water-room, if I was capa-

* Afterwards Countess Spencer. This was the beginning of a friendship which suffered no interruption till Mrs. Carter's death.

ble

ble of being entertained, but this is, at present, very little the case; for, though I am really much inclined to be pleased and amused, I have such a strange languor of spirits, and such a painful lassitude in endeavouring to exert them, as is not easy to be imagined by any one who has never experienced it. This is a disposition to which I have always been, in some degree, by fits, subject; and the events of last year have, I believe, greatly contributed to increase it. I write this account of myself to you, because I write only to you, for it is a secret with which very few people are to be entrusted, unless one would chuse to be thought whimsical or discontented.

I hope Lady Frances Williams and Mrs. Boscawen are perfectly recovered; pray mention them when you write. I am extremely honored by the remembrance of your friends in Berkley-square and Hill-street, and beg you will be so good to make my respectful compliments to them. O dear, O dear, did you ever say the thing that was exceeding civil for me to Mrs. and Miss Stanleys*?

Miss Talbot, I thank God, continues in a way of amendment which, though not very rapid, is,

* One of these ladies was afterwards Lady Mendip, and the other Mrs. D'Oyly. They both continued a very kind and friendly intimacy with Mrs. Carter, till her death.

I hope,

I hope, not at all the less sure, for she never seems to lose any ground; she has, at present, a little cold, but not the least tendency to a cough, and indeed is but slightly affected by it in any way.

I had great pleasure, the other day, in hearing very honorable mention made of Mrs. Scott, by Mr. Ford, who speaks of her in raptures; and it seemed to be quite a trial of his patience to be interrupted at every encomium, by Miss Talbot's affirming, that there was nothing he said of her, but what might be as fully said of her sister. But, notwithstanding their battling excellence against excellence, for a considerable time, he looked quite unconvinced that there could be two such people in the world; and I know no other way of our carrying the point, but your taking a trip down to Bristol, to confute him, for the poor man has strained his foot, and cannot get to Hill-street. He gives me very little encouragement to hope that Mrs. Scott comes to Bristol this year.

I keep drinking the waters very regularly, without finding they do me either good or hurt; but as I am here, I may even as well do like other folks. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu; let me have the happiness of hearing from you as often as you conveniently can; and believe me, with the utmost truth,

Your most affectionate, &c.

How

How does poor Mrs. Donelan do? I see the Geographical Cards are published, and I have sent my receipts to Bath for them, I shewed the proposals to Mrs. Spencer, but she had subscribed before.

LETTER X.

Bristol, *June* 4, 1759.

It is so very strange that in mere speculation neither you nor I could believe it, yet in fact it is true, that I was mightily out of humour and sulky at receiving my dear Mrs. Montagu's letter. I had heard a roundabout story that you were coming to Bristol. Did you cause this story to be invented, to keep me peaceable and quiet during your long silence? It certainly had that effect; I made you no secret reproaches, nor waited with any impatience for the post. But what a subversion was it of all my hopes, when, instead of the delectable three-cornered note, on which I had set my heart, to signify to me that you were come, I was presented with a four square letter, in which there was not one syllable to give me any reason to suppose you had even

even so much as thought of coming! And then, to make me amends for this disappointment, you conclude by telling me, you "will love me as little as you can," at the same time, you enjoin me "to love you as much as I can;" *videlicet*, that you may be exceedingly at your ease, while I am worrying my heart out.

Miss Talbot was a good deal lowered by her last bleeding; probably the more in proportion as her blood was so very much better than it had been; she seems now to have quite recovered it, and is, I thank God, upon the whole, in a very promising way. As to myself—No: till you have formally renounced that same gallant resolution, you may get intelligence about me as you can, for not one syllable shall you have from me. I have no manner of compunction at leaving you in this uncertainty, because I know that people who determine to love their friends as little as ever they can, are so happy as always to conclude that their said friends are perfectly well.

In compliance with your commands, I stuck myself into a window, close to the elbow of Mrs. Pitt *, and there belike, I might have re-

* Wife of the late John Pitt, Esq. and mother of Morton Pitt, Esq. M. P. for Dorsetshire. A most amiable and excellent woman, and a kind friend to Mrs. Carter, to the close of her life.

mained

mained stuck till this time, if it had been necessary for me to begin the conversation; but she was so good to release me from this difficulty, and speak first. For the first day or two, she did not seem to take cordially to me, but, at length, she very obligingly reproached me, that, notwithstanding your recommendation, I had not been to see her. In answer to this accusation, I uttered sundry inarticulate excuses, which ended in an appointment to wait on her the next day. The result of this visit, I apprehended, must be no other, than that the force of her understanding would knock me down, and my poor harmless lip-lap talk would render her exceedingly sick. In expectation of these melancholy events, I ascended Clifton-hill; and I heartily wish I had as much reason to suppose myself mistaken in the last part of my supposition, as I certainly was in the first. The visit, which I had taken it into my head was so very formidable, I found to be, in reality, extremely agreeable; my mortal terrors were all dissipated; and, except hanging my ruffle upon the lock, and running my nose against the door, I walked out of the room with a very graceful intrepidity. After all, seriously, I am much obliged to you for recommending me to the notice of Mrs. Pitt, who, from what I have been able to judge, seems perfectly well to deserve

serve the esteem you express for her. I wish I could give you a better account of her health, than she commissions me to do; but she told me, last night, that she does not think the waters will do her any good; yet she appears to be better, I think, than when she first came, and is not now at all hoarse.

By your account of them both, I find myself much more tempted to look out for Dr. Young's harmless bouquet, than the infernal composition of deadly weeds, made up by Voltaire. Is there no law in force in any Christian country against moral poisoning? How dreadful is it to think of what degrees of guilt and wretchedness the human mind is capable; and what can be imagined so deplorable as the condition of one who seems to have thrown off all sense of allegiance to the Supreme Being, and to be in a state of formal rebellion and hostility against the administrations of infinite wisdom and goodness!

You bid me use exercise, but what excursions can I make in this country of rivers and precipices, unless I could clamber like a kid, or swim like a fish? I do sometimes get upon the Down; but one soon grows tired of such a limited walk, and of always looking upon the same picture; indeed, if I could go farther, it would seem rather formidable to wander by myself in a strange land,

land, and it is not easy to meet with any body fond enough of rambling to accompany me. I have, upon the whole, been greatly pleased with the Pump-room; but it will now grow less agreeable, as some of the people whom I used to be very glad to meet there, are just preparing to leave it; and the crowd is now growing so thick, that it will not be possible to select any that one would wish to see more than the rest.

Adieu! I am going to a ball where I have nothing to do, and to which I have no earthly temptation, but that I believe my brother chuses I should go. Mrs. Underdown and he are at Bristol; and I hope the waters will be of use to his health, and the journey and change of situation to her spirits. In spite of your wicked menaces, I find myself, with as much warmth and sincerity as ever,

Dear Madam, &c.

LETTER XI.

Bristol, *June* 20, 1759.

Why did not you enclose me a dose of hellebore in the letter which showed how good a title

title you allow me to have to the whole produce of Anticyra *? But perhaps you conclude mine to be

"Tribus Anticyris caput insanabile."

And so it is, but far enough from being so in the way you accuse it. An aching head is an excellent antidote against the extravagances of a giddy one; and by this security, in spite of all the infection of the Pump-room, and my very little care to prevent catching it, I remain as wise, and as sober, and as dull, as if I dwelt opposite to it, in some hermitage on the side of the rock. In this quiet philosophical state, unincumbered with any of the superfluities of life, except half a gown and one cap, am I to be insulted with descriptions of birth-days suits, and enquiries after pompons and aigrettes, by a fine lady whose dress is the envy of every visiting room that has not the wit to find out, that it is no part of herself, and whose head must be turned round like a whirligig, by the perpetual motion of a London life! Pray, in the true visiting spirit, have you published this scanda-

* Hellebore was supposed by the ancients to be a cure for madness. It grew in great plenty in Anticyra, one of the Grecian islands. Horace alludes to it in other places, as well as in the verse here quoted.

lous

lous charge against me, among all your acquaintance, and will it be necessary for me, in vindication of my character, to walk through the Long-room, assemble the company round me, and harangue them? "Look, ye good people, I wear my hat just in the same way as I used to wear it, I dress just as awkwardly, I look just as silly, and I talk just as silly as ever; and so pray bear me witness that, for all Mrs. Montagu, I am exceedingly in my senses."

Well, my dear Mrs. Montagu, is this a better letter, and does it do you any good to be informed that I am two days in the week, and sometimes three, in bed with the head-ach, and part of the rest languid and good for nothing with the consequences of it? I did as you bid me, and as every body bid me; I drank the Bristol waters, and gave them fair play by drinking on, till I found myself evidently the worse; I left them off, and returned to another remedy, by which I had before thought myself evidently the better; and so, by these contrary operations, I am at present just where I was at first setting out, and shall have sufficient reason to be thankful if I continue there: as to my head ach, you need be under no manner of concern about it; it has been used to such outrageous freaks, ever since I can remember,

member, and will again, I hope, return to a more moderate state. O dear! I am sick of this subject, are not you? If you are, it is your own fault, by insisting on my talking on it; indeed your letter made it necessary I should enlarge a little on the disorders of my head, in proof of its sanity.

I heartily wish Mrs. Pitt would commission me to send you a better account of her health, but she still thinks herself but very little the better for the waters. I told her your advice against large quantities; and she assures me, she is very moderate. I have often the pleasure of meeting her in the Pump-room; she has drank tea two or three times with us, and I have as often waited upon her. We are all greatly charmed with her conversation, and I am every time the more convinced of the exact justice of your description of her. She sent for me, one day last week, and I went, thinking no harm, till, on entering the room, through the multiplying glass of my tears, I discovered a dozen people, run over them all, and in due time, found out that they consisted of only three, grew exceedingly intimate with them before I got home, and am to accompany Mrs. Pitt to dine with them, somewhere near Bath, to-morrow.

I have

I have met with Voltaire's " Optinisme*," and begun it, and read enough to find it so horrid in all respects, that I threw it aside, and nothing, I believe, will tempt me ever to look into it again. The reading such authors, appears to me just as absurd, as if I was to put myself under the tuition of the egregious Mr. Powel, to learn the art and mystery of fire-eating.

Well, I did go yesterday with Mrs. Pitt, to one of the most enchanting spots I ever beheld. How I wished it to be in Kent! Do you know Mrs. Riggs and Mrs. Ravaud? They are very agreeable people, and Mrs. Pitt speaks highly of them. I had as pleasant a day as my teizing head would allow me; not but I had some difficulties to encounter. Mrs. Trevor, who does Epictetus the honor of being desperately in love with his polite Address, was to be of the party, and not to be suffered to know the translator was one, who was accosted by a borrowed name. Could any dose of Gascoigne's powder be more effectual in a hot day, than the part I was doomed to act upon this occasion? Only think of it, and pity poor me. Mrs. Trevor, however, found out

* Probably " *Candide, ou l'Optimiste.*" Mrs. Carter's opinions, to the close of her life, were in unison with that which is here expressed; and she thought it tempting Providence to read books of scepticism or infidelity.

the trick much sooner than any body but myself, who was so particularly concerned in the discovery, perceived she did; for, to her honor be it spoken, she was to the full as sly as any of the rest of the good company. Mrs. Pitt told me last night, as we were coming home, that she really thought herself mended, which I was very glad to hear, at the end of a journey by which she seemed to be a good deal fatigued, though, by a very laudable self-denial, I kept her very quiet from talking; she is entertaining upon every subject, but I need not tell you with what particular pleasure I listen to her, whenever she mentions one person, which she always does in such a manner as satisfies even me.

The crowd now begins to grow very thick, and the number of melancholy objects is greatly increased, we see people one day walking through the rooms, they are absent the next, and the third one hears that they are confined to a coffin. Yet the "living seem to lay it very little to heart;" they who have been seriously drinking the waters in the morning, at night do all they can to disappoint their effect, by the heat and hurry of the ball; and there seems to be a perpetual conflict between two objects which can never be separated, health and pleasure. Those who are not engaged by any particular scheme for either, are

at

at leisure to form many a tender reflection on the scenes of human misery and distress which are so particularly striking in such kind of places, where one is inclined to consider the company as our family, and to grow interested for all one sees. A feeling heart, and a strong imagination, is very apt to transport itself from the gay flutter of fine folks in the ball-room, to the melancholy apartments of the poor hopeless invalids and their mournful friends, who have lost all ear for the music of joy, and pass the sad moments perhaps in listening to the dismal sound of the passing-bell. With this quick feeling of the sufferings of others, how lively ought to be the sense of gratitude in those whom the Divine goodness has favored with happier prospects of returning health to those they love.

Mrs. and Miss Talbot desire their compliments to you. Miss Talbot is now, I thank God, better than ever since she came to this place; she has been surprizingly mended for the last fortnight or three weeks; and if you were here, she would be able to battle with you in defence of Caractacus *. I should certainly be her second, as my brother would be yours; for he and I quarrel extremely about it. He charges me with his

* Probably Mason's Caractacus.

most respectful compliments to you, and whenever he comes to London, will esteem himself happy in the honor of waiting on you. My youngest sister is in London, and I would write to her to pay her respects to you, if she was not at such an immense distance, and there would be so many chances against her finding you at home. She is a very good girl, and I long to see her, which I have not done this age, for she is but just returned from Warwickshire, where she has spent above a year, in a manner which has been far from doing her health and her spirits any good, though it has been to the honor of her character. I hope the Deal air will recover her when she gets into it.

Adieu! I am just going to bed with the headach, but very well, and in good spirits, and ever my dear Mrs. Montagu's

Most obliged, &c.

LETTER XII.

Bristol, *August* 22, 1759.

Fye upon me, to be losing myself in idle reveries, when I might be conversing with my

my dear Mrs. Montagu. Now would I give any thing that you could, at this instant, see, how egregiously silly I am, provided, however, that you should pity me, and love me the better for it. I am at present quite in the temper of a peevish fretful child, who has quarrelled with all its play-fellows, and is crying for the moon. The thing I wish for, is just as much out of my reach; not that I can tell, if it was ever so near, I might put it to any use, but still I should be glad to have it my power. You cannot tell what I mean, nor I either; but I do verily believe that I mean something, and that if I was not half asleep, I should be able to find it out. I wish I was reclined beneath one of your trees at Sandleford: the garden within my view does not suit the situation of my thoughts; it would be absolute disgrace to the figure of elegant and sentimental melancholy, if one was to squat down upon an artichoke or a cabbage. My disposition requires some poetical shade, some soft twilight sky, the faint whisper of dying breezes, and the murmur of a sleepy stream. O dear, O dear! I do protest that I am not in love, which I think quite necessary to mention, because, by what I have read in a book, this description seems wonderfully like it, but indeed that is not the case; so far is true, that my present odd disposition

arises

arises from the struggle of a philosophical head, against the fooleries and idle refinements of too sensible a heart, and the fermentation of these two opposite principles, has produced the neutral composition of nonsense with which you have been so plentifully regaled.

I am charged with many compliments and thanks to you, from Mrs. and Miss Talbot, for your very obliging invitation; but their stay at Newbury will be so very short, that any degree of hurry would be too much for Miss Talbot, who is obliged to keep on in a perfectly regular track, from which she never deviates; she bids me assure you, however, that if it be for ever so short a time, there shall certainly be some means contrived for me to get a sight of you. Our time is not yet fixed, nor our route settled; if I know time enough to give you notice, you shall certainly hear from me, as I should be extremely sorry to leave the hopes of seeing you to a mere chance. It will not be in my power to see you but *en passant*, as I am to proceed with my friends here to London, and am engaged to spend some little time with my aunt, and I want to dispatch all these business as fast as possible, in order to get a sight of my friends in Kent, from whom I have been so long absent. My brother had left Bristol, before I had the favor of

your

your letter, or he would have thought himself greatly honored by your invitation. I am in some hopes we shall set out in about a fortnight; but one of Mrs. Talbot's servants is very ill, and there is no knowing yet how far that may alter our schemes.

It is surprising to reflect how many successive generations we have seen arise and vanish, during our stay in this transitory world of Bristol. Some are departed whom one remembers no more; but there are some whom it would be vexatious not to meet again in some other place; yet it is to be doubted perhaps whether the acquaintance which one forms here might give one equal pleasure any where else. In a situation like this, conversation is carried on with much more ease and freedom than is usually consistent with the set forms of more regular life. One can talk upon subjects in the corner of a ball-room, in a saunter through the gardens, or a window in the summer-house, which it would be mighty difficult to introduce into a downright visit. I believe the general view even of those diversions in which one has no immediate share, gives a peculiar kind of alacrity to the spirits, and imparts a mechanical advantage to the powers of the understanding.

I need not tell you how sorry I was to part with Mrs. Pitt. I am now lamenting the near prospect

prospect of losing Mrs. Howe *, in whose acquaintance I have been very happy. She talks of calling on you in her way, and I hope, for both your sakes she will keep her resolution. Is there not a charming spirit, and a very engaging *naivete* in her conversation ?. You cannot think how much good she has done me; I know you will love her and thank her for it. I have met with another of your friends, with whom I am greatly charmed. How is it possible you should never have mentioned Mr. Braithwaite to me? He seems, by what I have discovered of him, to be one of the most amiable characters I have ever met with, and am ten times more in love with him than I was with the dumb Captain. Seriously, I am very sorry to see him in so ill a state of health, as so valuable a character must be of great importance, not only to his own family, but the world. I have just now met him, and he desired me to present his best compliments to you. He often makes me very happy by talking of you, which he does in a manner that satisfies even me.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu; may every happiness attend you, and good health, and cheer-

* Of Grafton-street; the widow of —— Howe, Esq. of Buckinghamshire, and sister of Admiral Earl Howe, and of General Sir William, afterwards Viscount Howe.

ful

ful spirits, enliven every beauty of your present situation! I am, with the sincerest esteem and affection,

Your most obliged, &c.

Alas, poor good Lady Frances Williams!

LETTER XIII.

Lambeth, *September* 13, 1759.

We arrived here very safely and well, I thank God, on Monday afternoon, and Miss Talbot not at all the worse, I hope, for her journey; indeed it is not certain but she was the least fatigued of the company. Let me be thankful for the blessing of her life and prospects of happier health, in the midst of the grief I now feel for a domestic loss, in which I am most deeply and tenderly interested. I should have writ to you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, as soon as we got here, but a few hours after my arrival at Lambeth, I received the sad news of the death of my mother; she was no otherwise related to me than by marrying my father, but her great merit, in a very uncommon care of his family, rendered

rendered her a most valuable blessing to us all, and the particular regard and affection, which she always discovered for me makes me feel her loss with the tenderest sensibility. Her heart was good, and her life highly useful in that station in which Providence had placed her. After a long and laborious discharge of the cares of a large family, I hoped she would have enjoyed the latter years of her life in a comfortable state of relaxation and ease; and I pleased myself with the prospect that, by my care and attentions, I should contribute to her happiness. Of this flattering expectation, it has pleased God to deprive me, and to his will I desire to resign myself; may he enable me to make a right use of this and every other disappointment. On her account, I have nothing to regret, for what would have been all the trifling and imperfect comforts which my fondest solicitudes could have procured her, when compared with that happiness to which I trust the divine goodness has removed her*! My father's loss, in this sad event, strikes me more

* The Editor's mother, who was also her daughter-in-law, attended her death-bed; she has heard her say, that she was not only willing but even desirous to die, though in possession of every comfort which the world could give her. She expressed herself in this respect, though a woman of very moderate talents, in such a manner as would have done honor to a Boyle or a Newton, in the same situation.

deeply

deeply than even what I suffer from it myself, though very sensibly shall I feel the want of her in that melancholy family to which I now dread to return——This is a wrong turn of thinking; I have still innumerable blessings left, and very great comforts in my surviving friends, for which, I hope, I am sincerely thankful. But the first impressions of grief will be felt. How shall I miss her kind indulgence of many little inclinations, her tender concern for my health, and her constant watchful care of me, whenever I needed any particular assistance, which, as she was never from home, she was always ready, and always willing to afford me! But these are childish and selfish considerations, and ought not to be dwelt on in any other view than that of preserving the gratitude I owe to her memory. —What right have I, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to trouble you with this melancholy subject? None, but the right which you have so kindly given me, by assuring me that you love me.

Quando piu tra gli affanni altri si duole
Par che dè cari suoi piu si rammenti,
E ben che sian lontani, il dolor suole
Con forte fantasia farli presenti.
Meditiamo gli affetti, e le parole,
Onde ci renderian lievi i tormenti;
E con quei sensi in lor persona expressi
Pensiamo a loro, e consoliam noi stessi.

I met

I met with this passage yesterday, in Carlo Maggi, and it was so applicable to the state of my mind, that I could not help transcribing it. I cannot give a better proof of my dependance on your affection, than by saying, you immediately came into my thoughts, while I was reading it.

I intended to have gone into Kent on the first receiving this news; but my friends here very kindly prevented me, and my father has since sent me word, that he would not have me return home till the family is more composed; so I shall pursue my original scheme of going to my uncle's on Saturday. I know that is better for myself, than going immediately to Deal, but this I should not have considered, if my friends there had not all agreed in desiring me to defer it. In my present resolution, I propose to stay only a month, and then return to Deal; in what manner I shall proceed afterwards cannot be determined, nor thought about till I am got there.

I owe you a thousand thanks for your goodness to me, during the too short opportunity I had of seeing you in Berkshire. I recollect every expression of regard and friendship, with the most tender gratitude; and I flatter myself with a hope, of which I do not venture to examine the foundation, that I may be near you in town about spring.

spring. In the mean time, I know you will not forget your promise, that I may at least converse with your shadow. I know too that you will write to me, and I beg you will tell me particularly how you do; your saying a great deal of yourself, will do me real good, and furnish me with some kind of excuse for the liberty I have taken with you. Do not be uneasy about me; I thank God, I am tolerably well. I am, my dear Mrs. Montagu,

Your most obliged, &c.

P. S. I beg my compliments to Mrs. Scott. Had you any news of the basket, about which I was most heartily vexed? I hope you received my note from Newbury. Be so good to direct for me at Mr. Carter's, in Devonshire-street, without Bishopsgate.

LETTER XIV.

Devonshire-street, *October* 6, 1759.

You were very good, my dear Mrs. Montagu, in writing to me soon, and I heartily thank you for the consolation your letter gave me.

me. I am, upon the whole, as well as even you wish me to be, for you would not wish me to be insensible; my spirits are low, but I thank God, they are very peaceful; and I restrain myself as much as possible from all unnecessary aggravations of grief.

I rejoice to find your health is better than when I saw you, and that you are capable of enjoying with so much spirit, the blessing of a fine day; I heartily agree with you, in all your encomiums upon this subject, whenever it is connected with the idea of the country; but, in my present situation, I consider a fine day no otherwise than merely as a matter of convenience, as it keeps me out of the dirt; in any other view, one day in the city is just as good as another. Once in a week I visit the sun, moon, and stars, at Lambeth, where they are rather more visible than they are here, though Lambeth is far enough from looking any thing like the country; however, I am sure to meet with something there that will do me more good. Miss Talbot, I thank God, continues at least as well as when she left Bristol; yet she still wants strength, which I fear nothing but a length of time can give her, and if she does not lose ground this winter, one must be contented if she does not gain much. The last time I was there, I received

ceived a very obliging note from Mrs. Pitt, a new proof of your kind attention for me, in letting her know where I might be found. Mrs. Talbot and I were to wait on her in Portugal-street the next day, and she gave us the pleasure of her company the day after at Lambeth. I hope she is, upon the whole, mended by all her excursions, for she certainly appears in better health than when she was at Bath; I hope to wait on her some day next week; the notice she is so good to take of me certainly does me great honor, and I am doubly happy in it, from the reflection that I owe it to you; she tells me you do not think of coming soon to London, which would be a most vexatious intelligence to me, if you had not told me, in your last letter, that the country was better for your health, and more agreeable at present to your inclination; so, in pure disinterestedness, I heartily wish you to enjoy your groves at Sandleford, as long as there is a leaf remaining upon them.

Sis licet felix ubicunque mavis!

But do pray repay me for the good wishes of this line, by observing the injunction in the next; for I am not disinterested in every thing.

I believe I shall not stay much longer here, but am come to no particular determination about the time

time of my going into Kent. Whenever I begin to think about my return home, and the first meeting of my friends there, I feel my spirits sink, and therefore I endeavour not to think of it at all, for it is a circumstance with which I have nothing to do till I get there. It is equally our interest and our duty to restrain the wanderings of imagination, which is perpetually inclined to lose itself in flying off to distant situations, and to weary and perplex the attention about objects with which, till they become really present, it has no concern. How greatly does our peace depend on the observation of that divine precept which commands us to confine our thoughts to the passing day! With the hour of trial will always be connected the degree of support sufficient to bear us up under it, wherever it is sincerely depended on, and in the mean time, the objects by which we are immediately surrounded, are the proper exercise of our attention.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu; I am, with the sincerest gratitude and affection,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER XV.

Deal, *October* 26, 1759.

How unlucky was it for me, my dear Mrs. Montagu, that I should miss the sight of you both times that you were so good to call at Lambeth; another vexatious effect of my blundering genius, which, when you promised me the pleasure of seeing you, never once thought of appointing the hour, but very quietly concluded you would not come at Miss Talbot's time of riding; just as if it was to be supposed you had set down every thing that was once told you, in your Dodsley. It was impracticable for me to repair my loss by coming to Hill-street that day, and the next I flew into Kent. If I staid a day longer in London, I should have received a letter with a proposal to delay my journey, on account of the alarm about the French. As I did not receive it, I came away with a very safe conscience, and am very glad not to have met with any impediment. All the time I should have spent in London, after my resolution of leaving it had been taken, must have been past in an unsettled, uncomfortable way; for when one has any thing proper to do, there is no being at ease

till it is done. My return will, I hope, be of some little use or amusement to my friends here, particularly to my youngest sister, whose spirits are naturally weak, and now particularly need every affectionate assistance that can be given them, after the sad shock they have lately received. This consideration made me very anxious to get home, though I should have longed to see her without it, after our being absent from each other above two years; *she* certainly is my concern, the *French* are not; all I have to do about them is to recommend my country, my friends, and myself, to the protection of Providence, and then endeavour to drive the invasion out of my head, as it will not prevent it by remaining there.

You charged me to tell you how I do, which is rather a puzzling task, as I know mighty little of the matter. I endeavour, for the present, to render my mind quite a blank, by which means I keep tolerably free from very painful recollections; but I find I want spirits; instead of flying through the whole circle of my acquaintance, and visiting every favorite spot within my reach, as I always used to do at my return home, I sit mighty quietly expecting people to call upon me, or let it alone, as they think proper; yet I thank God I am not ill, and in a little time, I hope to

recover a proper degree of activity: indeed such a stupid indolence ought not to be long indulged, though one sometimes finds it necessary, as opiates are in attacks of strong pain.

Well, but how do you do, and what are you doing, and what are you to do? I long to hear that you are quite delivered from the terror of freezing in the arctic circle; not but your winter in London is much longer, for it lasts till July, but then you have the comfort of spending it among creatures of your own species, and in your own way.

Will you be so good sometimes to mention me to Mrs. Pitt, and to say every thing that may express my gratitude and esteem for her? Not that with all this, I am by any means in perfect charity with her, after my Lord Lyttelton's peremptory declaration, that she *admired* me, but did not love me; now to be sure, she might *admire* me if I was a vocal statue, or a walking tripod; but no such queer curiosity am I, I walk upon two feet like other folks, and there is not one inch of marble in my whole composition. Surely then, it is very hard that Mrs. Pitt should think of sticking me up in a cabinet, like a mere object of *vertu*, to be *admired*, and perish with cold, when I am so much better entitled to be placed in some obscure snug corner by a warm fire-side.

fire-side. I should be quite undone, if you had considered me in the same view of *admiration*, and placed me among your vases, and your Chinese dolls; but you affirmed that you *loved* me, and I felt beyond all comparison more happy in that declaration, than if the most honorable station had been assigned me, by way of curiosity, that could have been found in the British Museum.

I enclose the charming poem I mentioned to you, and hope it will make you as enthusiastically fond of Carlo Maggi as I am. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu. I am, with the sincerest esteem and affection,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER XVI.

Deal, *December* 11, 1759.

As I am not perfectly sure whether I have an incontestable title to all the privileges and immunities of an invalid, my conscience will not suffer me to be quite satisfied till I have thanked my dear Mrs. Montagu for her letter, which I have the more reason to do, as before I received

received it, I was beginning to grow very uneasy from the apprehension that your fever was returned. The state which you but too well describe was, I hope, merely the consequence of it, and that your next account will give me the pleasure of hearing that you have recovered the blessing of positive health and activity.

I have not read the History of the Penitents, except a little extract, with which I was greatly pleased. It is much to be wished indeed that the general fashion of novel reading did not render such antidotes very necessary. Various kinds of antidotes perhaps are necessary to the various kinds of poison imbibed in the study of these wretched books*, by which the understanding, the taste, and the heart are equally in danger of being vitiated. Those which are writ in the most specious manner, with great appearance of delicacy, and high pretensions to virtue, are of all others the most destructive; they form a jumble of right and wrong, so entangled toge-

* It will be obvious to the reader, how great has been the improvement which has taken place in writing novels, since the date of this letter. Mrs. Carter highly approved of many that have since been written by authors of considerable genius, as well as of strict morals, such as Mrs. West and Mrs. Radcliffe, and others who might be named; and she found the reading of such works a very pleasing relaxation from her severer studies.

ther,

ther, that it requires an exactness of judgment to separate them, which seldom or never belongs to young people, who take all together; and thus their heads become a mere chaos of confused ideas, and their hearts are cheated out of every fixed principle of action.

After quarrelling with the fashionable studies of this world, I proceed to give you some account of my own, which you have certainly a right to, as you were so good to furnish me with most of the books which have entertained me since I left London. I was greatly pleased by Dr. Newton's* second volume, who has collected and explained some of the prophecies, in the clearest and fullest manner, and given the strongest reasons to prove they relate to the papal power, of any writer I ever met with. There are many excellent things, no doubt, in the third volume; but in some parts

* Dr. Newton's, afterwards Bishop of Bristol, "Dissertation on the Prophecies." Mrs. Carter was afterwards very much acquainted with that learned and amiable Divine. In his Life, prefixed to his works, published after his decease, it is said, that the lines upon his monument in Bow Church, were written by Mrs. Carter; but this is contradicted by Mrs. Carter herself in a MS. note in her own hand, written in the margin of the volume, in which she says they were written by Mrs. Newton, the Bishop's widow. The fact is that Mrs. Newton sent them to be corrected by Mrs. Carter, who made considerable alterations in them.

the

the proofs seem to be a good deal strained, and there is a great mixture of fancy and hypothesis. Indeed it is very difficult for the soberest head, when engaged in framing the truest and most reasonable system, to rest quite contented with such materials as mere truth and reason can supply. While they think there is any thing wanting to render it quite complete, there will be a strong temptation to deviate into the regions of imagination, where human poverty and weakness finds a sure resource, and may be furnished with aids which will never be granted by the obstinate parsimony of common sense. After all, I mean no particular reflection on Dr. Newton, who writes, for the most part, with great judgment as well as great modesty, and is fallible merely as he is human, but upon the whole is entitled to great honor and esteem.

I read "The Sublime and Beautiful*" with pleasure, but to do it justice, shall think it necessary to read it again. I have read the first, and am in the second volume of Philip†, and am greatly delighted, both with the manner and style of the historian. Both you and I must, however, be mortified with this part of the history of our favorite Athenians, who make so

* Mr. Burke's celebrated Essay.

† Life of Philip of Macedon, by Dr. Leland.

worthless

worthless and contemptible a figure, that one despises them as much as one hates the execrable policy and ambition of Philip. Rousseau's book affected me very strangely. There is much good sense in it, and his arguments against a theatre at Geneva, seem utterly unanswerable, as well as some which he advances in a more general way. Yet there is something or other in the book that quite sunk my spirits, particularly in all the passages where he finds an occasion of mentioning himself. He seems to have strong principles of virtue, but in him it seems such an uncomfortable and even dismal virtue, as strikes one in some such manner as if one was to enter into a noble apartment hung with black. Surely the poor man cannot be a Christian, and then all is easily accounted for; in one of his notes he mentions the *Fils natural* (which you lent Miss Talbot) in such a way that I should suppose he was the author of it, and there is a character in that play which seems a perfect copy of his own. Do you know any thing of the history of this writer? I do not remember ever hearing any thing about him *.

All

* He was sufficiently known afterwards; and to him might well be applied the beautiful lines of Seneca:

"Illi mors gravis incubat
Qui notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi."

Mrs.

All our apprehensions on the coast are, for the present, God be thanked, quite vanished by the late providential dissipation of the Brest fleet. May these great successes be a means of procuring the blessing of a secure peace, a blessing infinitely superior to all the triumphs of victory. For what, alas, are the most splendid victories but so many sad instances of human guilt and misery!

My sister thinks herself greatly honored by your enquiry, and charges me with her best compliments and thanks. She has had a pain in her side, which, as she is inclined to be thin, and her constitution very delicate, gave me great uneasiness, but for these last ten days, it is much mended, and she is in all respects, I thank God, so much better that my fears are greatly abated. My eldest sister too is better than when I first came home, and as they are better, my health and spirits are better too.

Be so good as to present my compliments to Mrs. Pitt. You are engaged in honor, I think,

Mrs. Carter guessed truly that he was not a Christian; but whatever principles of virtue he might possess, of which he was continually boasting, they were never shewn in his actions. Perhaps no writings have ever been so pernicious to society as those of Rousseau. And such indeed was afterwards the opinion of Mrs. Carter.

not

not to suffer her to forget me. I hope you will soon make me happy by an account of your being quite recovered, and am,

Dear Madam, &c.

P. S. Is Lady Frances Williams in town? Be so good to mention, when you write, how she does.

LETTER XVII.

Deal, *February* 2, 1760.

Surely, my dear Mrs. Montagu, it is quite an age since I heard from you, and my patience will hold out no longer. I find there is no end to wearying myself with conjectures whether this silence is occasioned by your not having recovered the sight of your eyes, or by your having lost the feeling of your heart. It is a sign that I have translated Epictetus to mighty little purpose, or I should have no solicitude on this point, for he would have convinced me that a lost friend is no more than a broken pipkin; and though it is probable he might have allowed *you* to be composed of Dresden China, he would affirm

affirm that you were a pipkin still, and that one of mere earthen ware might do full as well. Now, though all this is very fine for people who consider their friends only as a subject of philosophical exercise, and may be mighty consolatory to such as need no consolation, I, who have attained no such sublime pitch of wisdom, can read and translate the whole chapter of friends and pipkins, without discovering any relation between the two things, and without being at all the less fretful and impatient at not knowing what is become of you. You may urge, in excuse of giving me this solicitude, that I desired you not to write till you could do it with perfect ease. Very true: but then you might, at least, have sent me your kind love and service by the carrier, or the waggon, or any such other conveyance, as folks who cannot write written hand, make use of, to tell their friends that they are in good health, hoping they are the same. Do, pray, by some means or other, be so good to let me have an account of you. I am sometimes in a fright about you, and sometimes in a tiff, but in either disposition,

Your most affectionate, &c.

P. S. There will be no end to my enquiries, for if you do not very soon let me know how you

you do *here*, I hope to be able to dispatch a messenger to you, from *Clarges-street.*

LETTER XVIII.

Deal, *February* 14, 1760.

THOUGH I hope very soon to have the happiness of seeing you, my conscience cannot be quite easy, unless I first thank you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, for a letter for which I am so greatly indebted to you. To thank you, indeed, is all I can do; to answer it is impossible; for how can I say any thing capable of doing you half the good which that letter did me? I wish I understood music as well as you do. One would not imagine that the syllables which form *Clarges-street,* were a very good subject; and yet, in the manner you have tuned them, they are become enchantingly harmonious, and they enlivened me into a gaiety of spirits which does honor to the power of your skill.

I congratulate you on Mr. Montagu's recovery from his cough, and myself on the account you give me of your own health. I must mention mine because you mention it. It is, I thank God,

God, as well as usual. My head generally confines me to a pillow, two days in a week; but one ought to be very thankful not to have any worse pain, than keeping quiet can relieve. Change of air, perhaps, for a little while, at least, may render my confinements less frequent. I hope to be in Clarges-street on Monday night. You are very good for so kindly thinking about my apartments, but it will be quite unnecessary for me to give you any trouble at present about them; I have recommended that care to Mrs. Norman, and I am persuaded she may be perfectly relied on.

I impatiently long to see you, but the lively pleasure I feel in thinking on it, is sometimes checked by the late experience I have had of the uncertainty of our fondest hopes. People who go to town to see sights, and racket from one crowd to another, set out with very different sensations from mine, whose end is to converse with people like you. They feel no solicitude about those they leave behind, or those they are to meet, for at all events, they are sure to meet with somebody or something, no matter whom or what. The pleasures of a volatile head, are much less liable to disappointment, than those of a sensible heart. For such as can be contented with rattles and raree-shows, there are rattles

and

and raree-shows in abundance to content them; and when one is broken, it is mighty easily replaced by another. But the pleasures arising from the endearments of social relations, and the delicate sensibilities of friendly affection, are more limited, and their objects incontrovertible; they are accompanied with perpetual tender solicitude, and subject to accidents not to be repaired beneath the sun. It is no wonder, however, that the joys of folly should have their completion in a world with which they are to end, while those of higher order, must necessarily be incomplete in a world where they are only to begin*. "*Il* "*luogo ove si godono i buoni parenti, ei buoni* "*amici e il paradiso. Cola aspettiamoci; colà* "*aintiamoci a giungere. Cola io spero di poter* "*esser eternamente come son qui.*"

Your most affectionate, &c.

* This beautiful and acute reflection admirably accounts for the difficulty which has often occurred to *the mind that museth upon many things*, why *the children of this world* should should seem to enjoy a greater share of happiness in it, than falls to the lot of the *children of light*. For Mrs. Carter's observation applies as well to the highest religious duties, of which the very essence is continual improvement in them, as it does to the social affections of the feeling heart.

LETTER XIX.

Deal, *May* 12, 1760.

My conscience will not suffer me to rest contented with the paltry excuse of waiting till the Dialogues arrive, before I thank you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, for the favor of your letter. I heartily wish it could have brought me a better account of your health, but all invalids must be particularly affected by this strange heterogeneous weather, which unites the fogs of November with the bloom of May,

> " And on old Hyem's chin, and icy brow,
> An od'rous chaplet of sweet summer buds,
> Is as in mockery set."

There is one advantage, however, in this cold, uncomfortable season, that you may, without scruple, stifle yourself at concerts and assemblies in London, and not be obliged to express the least wish for going into the country, which every body, in fine weather, seems to think it decent to do, though, according to Mrs. Pitt's maxim, it is every body's mortal aversion.

Do not flatter yourself that the anonymous author

thor of the Dialogues* will remain long concealed. I have a strange persuasion that it will immediately be discovered to whom the world is obliged for them; at least I think I should certainly have ascribed those which I have had the pleasure of seeing to but one person. I long for the combat betwixt Hercules and Cadmus, and still more for the fine Lady and Mercury. Indeed I long for the whole book; which I shall read with an adventitious pleasure, as it will recall so many valuable hours to my remembrance, and while other people are merely reading and admiring the work, I shall be conversing with the authors and their friends. I should very little deserve this advantage, if I did not feel a very lively pleasure from it; and I cannot esteem it as I ought to do, without reflecting how greatly I am indebted to you for it.

I need not exhort you to use all your influence with Mrs. Pitt to prevent her going abroad. I

* "Dialogues of the Dead," by the first Lord Lyttelton, were published, without his name, in 1760. To these were added three others, also anonymously, by Mrs. Montagu. These were between Cadmus and Hercules; Mercury and a modern fine Lady; and Plutarch, Charon, and a modern Bookseller. There is in them a great deal of wit, good sense, and knowledge both of the world and of history.

wish

wish you could persuade her to be of the opinion of that honest and impartial historian, who affirmed "London to be the biggest and finest city in the world, and all the people in London to be the wisest people in the world:" for if she was once convinced of this plain truth, it would surely be impossible she could ever forsake it. Seriously, a quiet and settled state, seems to be perfectly essential to her happiness. Change of scene, and variety of objects, may sometimes be of use to divert the melancholy of the soft affections, and give spirit to the languors of tender grief; but distempers contracted in the world, demand a different method of cure. Your friend—and indulge my vanity in the privilege you have procured me, of calling her mine,—is, I hope, recovering from that fever of ambition, and that delirium of extravagant wishes and fantastic schemes, which the best constitutions can scarcely avoid being infected with, in the air of a court. In this case, all hurry and agitation must be dangerous, and can only retard a cure, and gentle cooling remedies, and absolute repose, seem the only means of procuring any tolerable restoration to health. Do pray let me know as soon as she has fixed on a house, for one shall then have some confidence that she will remain in England.

Have you vindicated my character to Mrs. Stanley, whom you would never let me visit, and who very probably may conclude me to be so noisy and riotous, that I was not fit to be trusted in the room of an invalid. I am greatly obliged to you for mentioning Miss Talbot's healthy look; she gives me a most comfortable account of herself. Do you go to Lambeth, and do you send her any books?

If any of your servants should be dispatched into the Strand, I should be obliged to you, if you would be so good to send to Mr. Becket's, at Tully's Head, near Surrey-street, for the proposals for a subscription for printing Thucydides, in octavo, which I should be glad to see, for I enjoy the thought of a book, in a compass which I can read without a telescope*.

I cannot do as you bid me; though I very sincerely thank you for saying you so much regret my departure, it is impossible that I should *pity* you for it, for I am sure if you regret it as much as I am concerned to desire you should, you would be far enough from thanking any

* As Mrs. Carter was extremely short-sighted, it was very inconvenient to her to read in a large book. But she could read the smallest print without any trouble, even to the close of her life.

body

body that would tell you how to help it. That you never may be able to help it, is the most malicious wish that can ever be wished you by

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER XX.

Deal, *May* 19, 1760.

Dear Madam,

It was not till last night that I had the pleasure of receiving either your letter or the Dialogues. My brother happened to be present when the book arrived, and the wretch snatched it away in an instant, though with so many good words, that I had no power of resistance. He has but just now sent it back, and I have consigned it over to my father, till I have thanked you for it. I could not, however, let it go out of my hand, till I had at least run over the two first of the three Dialogues, which gave me a pleasure at least equal to what I had expected from them. It is downright scandal to say that Cadmus talks like a pedant; he has all the elegance of polite literature: and it is equally scandalous to suspect that Mrs. Modish wants the power of amusing; as a proof of it, I have laughed most cordially

at the fine lady delineation of the *bon ton*, which is perfectly original, and must be universally *tasted* by all who ever heard the expression, and *felt* by all who aim at the character.

I am very sorry to hear that Lord Lyttelton is still so far from well; yet few people have such consolation for ill health as he, who is capable of employing the hours of languor and confinement, in a manner that does so much honor to himself, and may be of so much use to the world.

I am much obliged to you for the improved state in which you have returned my glass. I shall soon set down to Lady Frances Williams's book; there needed all the merit of her recommendation to tempt me to look into a quarto, but I promise myself great instruction from her character of the work. I am perfectly sensible of the honor you all did me, by preserving me alive in your memories that evening at Mrs. Pitt's; it is the next degree to the happiness of being of the party.

I wish you every enjoyment of clear skies and flowery prospects in the country, and hope you will not be sufficiently fatigued by the *historiettes* of the good gentlewomen of Ealing, to counterwork the benefit of the air. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu. I have not told you half how much I admire the Dialogues. I am persuaded

I shall

I shall soon enjoy the pleasure of hearing them admired by the rest of the world; and at the same time I shall feel a very singular delight from the reflection that scarcely any body can have so much reason to love the author of them as her

Most obliged, &c.

LETTER XXI.

Deal, *May* 23, 1760.

Dear Madam,

As I hoped to gain a more particular information of the Dean of Canterbury's health, by a visit I was to pay in the country this afternoon, I deferred answering your enquiry immediately. But I have heard little more than I knew before. About six weeks ago, he was thought to be in such a state as must soon carry him off; but he is, since that, grown better, and I do not find there is any immediate prospect of his death. He is carried out in his chariot for the air; but is utterly helpless, and often, I am told, entirely loses his memory and understanding, yet has intervals of both. This is a sad alteration in a man who had once very lively parts and a social disposition. His present melancholy situation has surely

surely blunted all the darts of envy and obloquy which, in his more prosperous days, have often so cruelly, and I hope, in many instances, very unjustly, attacked his character. But he had none of the arts, which help to reconcile the world to great successes; and the want of a popular behaviour, often rendered him less beloved and esteemed than he deserved. But you bid me tell you the state of his health, not write an apology for his life; but I know you will excuse my expressing some tenderness for the memory of a person, by whom I was always treated with marks of cordial regard and good-will, and with whose family I have been so long acquainted *.

I am much obliged to you for an account of the justice which the public does to *all* the Dialogues; every body who has read them here is equally charmed. I seldom venture to propose any modern book to my father's reading, as I know, he thinks there is, in the present race of

* Dr. Lynch, the gentleman here alluded to, died two days after the date of this letter. He was the head of a very ancient and honorable Kentish family. He was a liberal and hospitable man, much envied for his great preferments. His two sons, Sir William Lynch, K. B. and the Rev. Dr. Lynch, Archdeacon and Prebend of Canterbury, having died without children, the family is now extinct in the male line; but several descendants from his daughters, in very respectable and opulent situations, are still remaining.

writers,

writers, a poverty of meaning, and an affectation in style, which he holds in great contempt; but here I knew I was very secure; and indeed he talks of the Dialogues in a manner which satisfies even me; and I know not when I have heard him speak of any book with so much approbation and pleasure. My brother is equally charmed; and to show you that Mrs. Modish is a favorite here, as well as in London, he would not suffer Mrs. Underdown to get regularly through the book, till she had read that Dialogue. Without any manner of falsehood, I have hitherto avoided all difficulties about the author, who, you tell me, is as well known in town, as I always told you she would be. The book is, at present, in the hands of my brother Harry, and from him it is to pass to my sister's, and when I am likely to get quiet and undisturbed possession of it myself, I cannot foresee.

You very justly censure those fine ladies who, with such a thoughtless gaiety, could crowd to a sight, which must strike every feeling heart with compassion and horror. By the accounts one sees in the public papers, with what a shocking insensibility of his own deplorable condition did that poor unhappy criminal close his wretched life! How far the last tears of fruitless contrition, may be of efficacy to alleviate

the

the punishment due to a long course of atrocious offences, we cannot tell; and it is the height of madness and folly to place any dependance on so hazardous a foundation. Yet in such sad cases, it is the only chance; and at least such a behaviour avoids that dreadful aggravation of guilt, and hardened impenitence.

You tell me you do not know but you may at last become an author in form. I hope you are in earnest, and long to know, whether you have really thought on any particular plan. I really think the character of Mrs. Modish, may make many a fine lady heartily ashamed, yet how long that salutary effect may last, I know not, or whether she may not content herself with displacing one absurdity to make room for another. Merely to pluck up the weeds of vice and folly as they rise, is an endless task. There will be a constant succession perpetually springing up in vacant ground, and the only way of preventing their growth, is by sowing the mind with principles of duty. I heartily wish you to be engaged in some work of this kind.—I have this moment a summons to go to Mrs. Hawkins Browne, who is at Deal. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu.

Your most faithful, &c.

LETTER XXII.

Deal, *September* 5, 1760.

CERTAINLY so many months could not have past, without making some enquiry after my dear Mrs. Montagu's health, if I had not often received some information of it, from the rest of my correspondents. I heard of you, from more than one person, as flying about the world in the manner you describe; and how could I think of directing a letter I knew not whither, or that any mortal post-boy could ever overtake a fellow traveller with the sun? Besides, I was, at intervals, extremely sulky, from the apprehension that I was defrauded of my apartment in your heart, and that somebody or other had gone and hired it over my head. This, I could not help thinking a very hard case, as I had been a very peaceable and orderly tenant, had done no damage, nor made any racket, was contented with my own situation, and never raised any disturbance by encroaching upon the rights of my neighbours; and moreover, had always duly and truly paid my rent, value to you one pepper-corn. In the midst of my apprehensions, however, I comforted myself with the thought that you would not do so unhand-

unhandsome a thing as to turn me out without any manner of warning, and I was determined not take any but from yourself.

It gave me great pleasure to hear you were going to Tunbridge, because I hoped it would do you good; and it gives me still more, to find that it actually has done you good. There is something vexatious in the thought of your being in the same county, and I to have no more chance of seeing you, than if you were in the north. Upon this occasion, I have mightily felt the want of two human conveniences, a post-chaise and a house. If I had been possessed of the one, I would certainly have come to Tunbridge; and if I had been mistress of the other, I would have endeavoured to prevail on you to come to Deal. But neither post-chaise nor house have I. I had pleased myself with the thought, that when my brother went into Hampshire, which he had been talking of for some time, I would borrow his; but, in the midst of several agreeable reveries, in which I had secretly indulged myself, he lent it to Mrs. Oxenden, who is going to bathe in the sea. I comfort myself now with the thought, that all the pretty schemes I had formed were merely reveries, and that if I had carried my point, it is a hundred to one whether you could have bestowed a day or two upon me or not.

I do

I do not rejoice much to hear that Mrs. Pitt is going to take a long lease of a house in Piccadilly; but I shall be heartily glad to hear, that she actually has taken it. I am very happy in her having a thought about me upon this occasion, and am too much interested in standing to the engagement which you have made for me, not to stand to it in a very effectual manner. I am very glad that the *beaux esprits* of France know enough of our language to be able to do justice to the Dialogues.

You kindly bid me mention my health, which is, thank God, very well, except head-achs, rheumatisms, and sometimes little fevers, all which I consider as so many non-naturals, which there is no living without.

I had writ so far a day or two ago, but one of my little frippery fevers prevented my finishing. I received your second favor last night, and am extremely obliged to you for thinking on Mrs. Talbot. How far she is qualified for the place you mention, I really cannot venture to say, as all I know is, that she bears a very good character, and is well esteemed among all her acquaintance, and I believe will do her best to oblige any family into which she is taken. She is at present at Miss Berkins's in Tunbridge Town, (the house, I think is a boarding-school,) and if you will favor me with a line that it will not be disagreeable

agreeable to you, I will write to her, and desire her to wait on you, and by that means, you will be the better able to judge from any questions you judge proper to ask her, whether she is a fit person for the employment you mention. I very heartily wish she may, as from every thing I ever heard, she is a deserving young woman, and I believe in very distressful circumstances. I congratulate you on the additional connection in your family, which, I hope, will prove an addition to your happiness. I shall be much obliged to you for the Highland Poems. My head is so bad that I scarcely know what I write, and I can only add the assurance of my being,

Dear Madam, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

Broome, *October* 31, 1760.

The whole art of physic could not have supplied me with so effectual a cordial, my dear Mrs. Montagu, as the very affectionate concern which you are so good to express for me. After this declaration, can you imagine that I should be such a *felo de se* as to comply with your most unconscionable demand of teaching you

you to love me less? on the contrary, I heartily wish I knew by what method I could teach you to love me more. I do not think it possible that your love for me can, upon the whole, do you any manner of hurt, and it certainly does me a great deal of good. The affection of my friends is my treasure, and I should think it very ill exchanged for the riches, and honors, and pleasures which engage the heads and hearts of the fine folks of this world.

I am not much given to quackery, yet I cannot, for the life of me, help prescribing for your tooth-ach; do, pray, wash your mouth several times in a day, with tar-water. I never have had any considerable degree of this teazing pain, since I tried this method, and it is equally successful to the person who prescribed it to me. It is, at least, worth trying, as it is so very easy a remedy, and cannot possibly, I think, do any harm, only perhaps till you are used to it, make you a little sick. I should have immediately writ to entreat you to try it, but when I received your letter, I was just setting out to spend a few days at this place with Mrs. Oxenden*. The region of Barham Downs is a perfect *terra incognita* to me. I rambled about yesterday, as far as I could

* Wife of Mr. afterwards Sir Henry, Oxenden, and mother to the present Baronet of the same name.

venture,

venture, in a strange country, and came back very happy in the conviction, that there is no part of Kent comparable to the environs of Deal. This house, which is a very good one, built, I think, by Inigo Jones, originally belonged to Sir Bazil Dixwell, of formal memory, who left it to Sir George Oxenden's second son, with extreme caution, that he should bear the arms and name of Dixwell only. The poor young man was very soon seized with a mortal distemper, and after languishing a few years of obscure inactive life, in the joyless possession of this inheritance, died unmarried; by which means it is fallen to his eldest brother, and the *name* of Dixwell inhabits the house no more. I know not whether one is universally to condemn this anxiety for determining the possession of houses and lands to certain letters of the alphabet; yet one sees it is so much oftener the solicitude of insignificancy and vice, than of distinguished wisdom and virtue, that there is great reason to suspect, it has its foundation in nothing but folly *. It seems as if people, instead of "con-

* It seems to have been a very ancient, if not an excusable folly. The Psalmist reproves a weakness of the same kind, and as common in the present day. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names*—Psalm xlix. 11.

fessing

fessing themselves to be strangers and pilgrims upon the earth," considered this world as a perpetuity, and their name as some constituent sensible part of their composition, which was to plant, and build, and hunt, and eat, and drink, and revel, throughout all generations. I came here on Wednesday, and am to return to Deal to-morrow; as the greatest part of my own family are here too, it did not depend upon myself whether I would come or not, which I am glad of, for my indolence would have raised a hundred foolish difficulties at quitting my own fire-side. Mrs. Oxenden is a very agreeable, and a remarkably good woman, and I am left at perfect liberty to follow my own devices, for the greatest part of the day, and having had my due fit of the headach on Tuesday, I am in tolerable security of not being driven to a pillow by it, before I get home. By your description of your abode, I fancy we are both, at present, in the same degree of latitude within the polar circle, for I never felt any cold so intensely keen as the air of this place. Deal is quite a tepid climate compared to Barham Down *.

You

* Strange as this observation may seem at first sight, Deal being on the very margin of the sea, and very little sheltered, it is perfectly just. The Editor, who has been much in the habit

You rejoice me by the account that your continuance at Newcastle will not be long. Your way of life there must not only be vexatious to your mind, but, I am afraid, very hurtful to your health. It is provoking that you should be squandered away upon people who would be just as well pleased with any body else, that could dress fashionably, and frequent balls, and plays, and visiting rooms. In this fever of dissipation, it is no wonder your imagination should often cool itself in the retirement of a desart wood, or the hollow of a rock. Yet, as charming as your solitary scheme appears in mere speculation, it is to be hoped, for the good of the world, as well as your own, that you will never be able to put it in practice.

I am in some solicitude for fear Mrs. Pitt should be a sufferer by the King's death. It would have been more public-spirited first to have mentioned the public loss, which I really think very great. I suppose there never was any prince who more effectually outlived all personal prejudice against himself, nor to whom a whole nation would more sincerely have addressed the Eastern

habit of visiting in that neighbourhood, has frequently made the same remark; and it is verified by the fact that vegetation in the gardens at Deal is forwarder by several days, than in those which are adjacent to Barham Downs.

com

compliment *. God grant that wise and honest counsellors may be found to assist the youth and inexperience of his successor!

You tell me that Mrs. Pitt has got a house, but most vexatiously omit to tell me where it is. I hope you will be able to give me a good account of her success from the Bath water. Your description of the retirement of "chiefs out of war, and statesmen out of place," is excellent; but I hope, does not affect our friend, whose ideas, I think, must have been too various and active ever to be contracted into so narrow a circle as that which bounds the views of a mere courtier; her thoughts must have made frequent excursions beyond the diurnal rotation of hopes and fears, in which little minds are whirled about and lost. When she is once quietly settled, and at leisure to collect the treasures of her understanding, and contemplate the state of the world within, she can never grow languid for the want of amusement or employ. After a train of years past in the bustle and perplexity of public life, the wisest and best must have reviews to make, accounts to settle, and regulations to form, enough to engage

* "O King, live for ever!" Mrs. Carter was frequently used to observe, that the three best monarchs that ever sat upon the throne of England, were the three Kings of the House of Hanover.

the attention of the most active mind, and to give business and spirit to retirement. I hope I shall soon have the pleasure of hearing that your tooth-ach is gone, and your time fixed for leaving Newcastle. I am,

Dear Madam, &c.

P. S. I am got back to Deal, and lost a post by not knowing cleverly how to send my letter from Broome.

LETTER XXIV.

Deal, *January* 12, 1761.

It gave me much more joy, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to hear you were free from pain, than that you had parted with your tooth, as I know, from woful experience, that one does not always follow the other, as I have had my own head almost twisted off by this horrid operation, and been none the better for it.—Do pray, try my prescription of tar-water, it is an infallible cure, depend upon it.

I congratulate you on the removal of your anxiety about Admiral Boscawen, who, I find by the

the papers, is in so hopeful a way of recovery. I am much obliged to you, for giving me so particular an account of a character, in which, as an English woman, I am sincerely interested. I am very happy in having judged as you do, with regard to the favor shewn to Lord B——, and have talked as far as my poor frippery voice could be heard, amongst opponents extremely vociferous in defence of it. I have nothing to do with politics; but to resist as far as one properly can, every tendency to a spirit of faction, and seditious discontent, seems to be the duty of every subject of a lawful and equitable government.

You are very good to talk of sending me books, but I hope very soon to be in your neighbourhood, as good Mrs. Norman has orders to get ready to receive me; your having recommended me to that house, is one amongst hundreds of obligations I owe you, they are such quiet good sort of people; when there, I hope to give you a better account of myself than I can at present. All who trouble themselves about me here, are very impatient for me to be gone, as change of air seemed to do me so much good last year. One would imagine, to be sure, that I had some fine-lady distemper, which nothing but London could relieve. However, if racketing was my motive,

I certainly need not stir from this place, which has, for some time, been one of the gayest in the kingdom. We have balls, assemblies, concerts, plays, card-tables, &c. &c. &c. without number, yet, by the virtue of an aching-head, I have been as quiet and sober, amidst this general hurry, as though I had been living in the hollow of a rock. This is a restraint under which I find no great difficulty, in being tolerably philosophical; perhaps it would be honester to say insensible, as I certainly cannot pretend to much philosophy, in cases where I happen to feel, I have just now a sorrowful proof of the want of it, in the reluctance I experience in parting with one of my most intimate friends* from this neighbourhood, after having enjoyed the pleasure of being placed within three miles of her for thirteen years. I can scarcely guess myself how great an alteration her removal will make in the appearance of this country. My ideas will be strangely disconcerted, and at a loss to find her, after being so long accustomed to view her in one charming spot, which usually terminated all my

* Dethia, daughter of Sir Thomas D'Aeth, Bart. at this time wife of Herbert Palmer, Esq. and afterwards of Lieut. Col. Cosnan. She was then residing at Ripple House, about three miles from Deal; and afterwards lived at Wingham House, the seat of the Palmer family.

rambles,

rambles, and where, after the quiet exercise of many a solitary mile, I was always sure to find my thoughts enlivened by a peculiar spirit of joy. Besides the principal attachment of a sincere affection, there was something so remarkably elegant and lively, in her taste, her temper, her situation and manner of life, that with her, I have past some of my gayest and most pleasing hours. She kindly admitted me to a share in all her social entertainments, as well as her more quiet amusements. With her I used to gather the first violets of spring, and the roses of summer, and we together enjoyed all the various beauties of the varying year. And now, perhaps this sweet abode, which makes a point of view to most of my walks, and which I have so long known perfumed by the fragrance of every flower, enlivened by music, and endeared by many a tender remembrance, will soon probably be overgrown with nettles, silent, solitary, and a mere picture of ruin, or perhaps fall into the possession of some roaring squire, or notable fat country gentlewoman, insensible to all its beauties, who will tear up the roses and myrtles, that she may the more plentifully stuff her servants with potatoes, and increase her stock of dried marygolds and sage.

In my situation here, where I spend the greater part

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part of my time, and where I have but very few intimate acquaintance, the loss of any one is really a serious point, though possibly wise folks might reason against one's thinking it such, and fine folks might laugh; but my head is not like the head of wise folks, or fine folks, nor their heart like mine. My quiet unimportant life, is so little engaged in the passions and interests, the business or the pleasures which employ the bustling people of this world, that I am left at full leisure to feel every affectionate weakness, and every tender regret.

If you are not too much engaged, I shall be obliged to you if you can give me any information when the deep mourning* is to be at an end, for here we know nothing about it, and I do not wish more clothes than need must. Excuse this lamentable paper, for I have not any with a black edge. My brother desires his respects to you, and I am,

My dear Madam, &c.

* For the death of the late King.

LETTER XXV.

London, *May* 16, 1761.

My Dear Friend,

I GRIEVE to hear you have been so unwell, but finer weather will, I hope, remove your complaint. I suppose you have heard from Lady F—— C——*, she sent for me on Sunday, to desire I would let you know that Mr. Sutton did not now approve of his patients being too much in the open air, during inoculation †, therefore you should be very cautious not to carry it too far.

Mr. Vesey is sometimes deliberating about inoculation, but I rather think he will not prove so gallant a knight as to take up your gauntlet. He talks of going to Spa, this summer; whether our Sylph ‡ is to accompany him, is yet an undecided point, and she is quite ignorant of her des-

* Lady Frances Coningsby.

† This was not the only time of Mrs. Montagu's being inoculated; but it was always ineffectual. She was always in dread of the small-pox, but never took it.

‡ Mrs. Vesey, the dear friend of both ladies. They called her the Sylph, on account of her spirit, wit, and vivacity, which were such that there seemed no particle of *matter* to have entered into her composition.

tination;

tination; several of her relations are come to town, which prevents my seeing so much of her as I wish; I was there last night, and the only English person among them, but I hope they considered me a tolerable member of the society, as I made myself as far Irish as possible, in wearing an Irish stuff.

I have not seen Lord L—— since the marriage. It was indeed a most ungracious act; and, poor soul, she will too probably severely suffer by the consequences. I suppose you have heard that his Lordship has seen them; some of his friends wish he had delayed it some time longer; but the goodness of his heart would suffer too much by yielding to mere prudential reasons.

The weather has been so bad, that not all my prejudices in favor of the *happy connubial state*, could carry me to make any enquiries in Cecil-street; so I think it not very probable that the affair will be concluded before your return to assist me in framing a device for favors.

I was yesterday at the exhibition, with dear Mrs. Dunbar, and by going early, when the room was almost empty, and departing before it was filled, I felt but little inconvenience from the heat; you may imagine it could not be a very formidable crowd, as we met Miss Talbot there. I saw Mrs. Best, who enquired much after

after you, and said she should visit you during your exile at Kensington *. The portrait by which I was most struck is a child, by Miss Read †, so much alive as to make the rest appear mere pictures. Among the historical pieces, is the Raising of the Shunamite's Child, which is so well done as to be almost too painful to look at. I wish you had been there, for I think you must have been amused by the merit of some of the pieces, and the ridiculous awkwardness of others.

Adieu, my dear friend; pray let me hear from you to-morrow, for I am very anxious about you. Mrs. Vesey is just come in, and sends her love; you are well assured of that of your most affectionate.

* During the process of her inoculation by Mr. Sutton.

† A Painter of some note at that time. She afterwards painted a portrait of Mrs. Carter for Mrs. Montagu; which after Mrs Montagu's death was kindly given by her nephew and heir, Mr. Montagu, to the companion and acquaintance of his early years, the Editor.

LETTER XXVI.

Deal, *May* 23, 1761.

HERE I am, my dear Mrs. Montagu, safely arrived, and better after the exercise of a walk to-day, than after the heat of a coach last night. I had quite set my heart upon reaching Deal yesterday, but my brother, who was so good as to meet me at Canterbury, had, in his vivacity, made an engagement for me on the road, which, in the spirits I was in, was very irksome to me, but as I knew it was kindly meant, I made no opposition, though I knew I must exert myself more than I wished, in gratitude to friends who, I felt, would be delighted to see me, and whom, under other circumstances, I should have been glad to have been with. When I reached my destination, because I was not inclined to talk at all, I talked a great deal more than was necessary *, and having thus very laudably quite lost my voice, I was obliged to go to bed. This morning, I was quite comfortable, and my brother

* The willingness to sacrifice her own inclinations to those of others, where principle and duty were not concerned, remained with her to the close of her life. No woman was ever less selfish.

made

made not the least opposition to my pursuing the remainder of my journey in my own natural way. You cannot in conscience, after your approbation of his system, quarrel with me for walking to-day to Deal. But here again my scheme was a little frustrated, for I was not suffered to pursue my own solitary walk, for my friends would accompany me part of the way. This was kindly meant, but my spirits were low, I wanted to be alone, I wanted to think on you, not but I had thought of you often enough, while I was talking about something else, and to the emolument no doubt of those who heard me, this consciousness made me talk the faster; but thinking of you in a crowd, is like conversing with you in a crowd, and nothing would content me but a *tête-a-tête*. However, as I approached Shoulden, where my brother and sister Pennington reside, I was less able to think of even you; I longed to have the meeting over, a trial I so much dreaded, but they had too great tenderness for me to express what they felt, and turned all their solicitude on me, a half-drowned creature by the rain. I found your little patient looking as arch and as rebellious as ever, though thin and pale, and his breath at times much affected. I look at him with fear and trembling, when I reflect that thus the dear little angel we have lost suf-

suffered*. How can I use that expression and lament his loss! I know not how to explain my feelings on this occasion, I only know, alas! that I cannot prevent them; but I hope soon to be enabled to withdraw my thoughts from this painful subject, and acquire that degree of cheerfulness which every one ought to feel, who has so many blessings to be thankful for as I have, and who in a world so liable to hourly changes, has had so few losses to lament.

To any one else it certainly would be necessary for me to make some apology about me and mine, but you insisted on it; and I am happy to think from very sufficient reasons, that the subject is interesting to you. How shall I find words, my dearest friend, to express the sense I have of all I owe you, for so many instances of the kindest affection and attention, shewn at all times, but particularly at this time, there is no describing the good your affectionate interest in my family concerns has done me, no mortal support could have done me so much as the tenderness of a friend like you. Where are you now? alas, at the distance of seventy miles!

Do not be uneasy about me; I shall often go to Shoulden; the exercise will do me good, and

* The Editor's eldest brother, who died before he was born.

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an endeavour, as far as I am able, to contribute to the cheerfulness and comfort of dear Mr. and Mrs. Pennington, will strengthen and improve my own. Adieu, my dear friend, believe me, with inexpressible gratitude, &c. &c.

LETTER XXVII.

Deal, *June 9*, 1761.

I was glad to find the late doleful weather had no worse effect on your health, my dear Mrs. Montagu. For these last two days we have seen a little of that stranger the sun, but his beams are so languid, and the wind so cold that one has little more idea of the summer, than might be had from green fields in a picture.

I heartily join with you in wishing that a set of charitable translators would give one an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Muses of every climate. Poetry perhaps suffers less from the want of any cultivation at all, and more from an improper sort of cultivation, than any species of composition whatever. Other authors, to arrive at any degree of perfection, require much previous information, and the assistance

sistance of different arts; but a poet may strike and charm any one, if he has only ears and eyes, that can hear and see, and a heart that can feel. —In the rude essays of mere uncultivated nature, one shall never, I believe, be shocked with the monster of false wit, that painful studied distortion of the human understanding. I am just now particularly disposed to think the wild song of an American in his native wood, must be greatly preferable to the quaint epigrams of a lettered Spaniard, as I have this afternoon been reading Gratian's Treatise on Poetry; he quotes such wretched examples of pert *concetti* and frigid puns, for instances of fine writing as have quite put me out of patience. It is strange that the man should not have been led to suspect his own notions to be false, merely from the circumstance of finding he had scarcely any ancient author to allege in support of them, except Martial*. Shall I return you *la Mort d'Abel* immediately? I have an odd account from London that it is forbid to be sold, which I cannot guess the reason of; have you heard any thing of it, and is it true?

* Yet Dr. Johnson was very fond of Martial; and when this circumstance was mentioned by Mrs. Carter in a letter to her father, Dr. Carter, who was a deep and critical scholar, he replied that it give him a very bad opinion of Johnson's taste and learning.

I am

I am glad to hear my Lord Bath is in such good spirits, and that he has reason to be pleased with Lord Pulteney's letters. It is to be feared the taking Fort Palais does not proceed quite so expeditiously upon the spot as in London. There is some alarm about a visit from the French upon our coast. Sir Percy Brett is gone on board, and Lady Brett is gone pretty suddenly from Deal. All the certain intelligence I know is, that there are great numbers of soldiers at Boulogne, and I think at Dunkirk.

Did you go to the birth-day, or did your *chair* go to the birth-day? I long to know all you do, and all you say, and all you think; I *shall* not be perfectly well satisfied, unless, for my sole information and emolument, you set yourself to compose a journal. Have you proceeded at all in a design so truly worthy of you, as attempting to make peace between Dr. Y—— and his son? How is Lady Coningsby? Pray mention her when you write, for I am in pain for Lady Frances Williams.

I owe you a thousand thanks for all your kind enquiries about my family, any share they have in your regards must always be an important addition to the happiness I enjoy in your friendship. How could you allege so idle a reason for concluding your last, I shall not be in perfect charity

charity with you till you tell me all you have done since. Adieu, &c. &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

Deal, *June* 22, 1761.

Though perhaps it may not be reasonable to insist that all manner of promises in this world shall be accomplished *au pied de la lettre*, you have so little accustomed me, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to any disappointment of my expectations from you, that I cannot help being uneasy, that so many days have passed since you gave me an absolute hope of hearing from you by the next post. I was very reasonable, and thought you might be harassed by engagements for two or three days, but last night I had so full a persuasion that I should hear from you, that, between light and dark, I seized a letter which did in no sort appertain to me, and it was not till after it had been proved to me, by very solid arguments, that I was no *esquire*, that I was prevailed on to let it go. Do pray, as soon as possible, give me an opportunity of quarrelling with you

you, for this disappointment, by letting me know that you are perfectly well.

It is determined that my sister* goes to Bristol; and however much, my dear friend, I may wish to meet you at Tunbridge, and however keenly I may feel the disappointment of my hopes of seeing you, I cannot make up my mind to say a word to my father about my wishes, unless he were to mention it himself, for I fear he would be very dull alone, and that it would be uncomfortable to him to lose us both at once; and she, poor soul, must go, her cough is so very bad. I must, therefore, console myself under this really great mortification, by feeling that I do what is right, and what ought to be done; but, notwithstanding all these sage reflections, I still cannot help wishing to be with you, though but for eight or ten days; I have so much to say to you about poor Mrs. Talbot, who is still unprovided for; I think I have found out the reason why a certain august personage refused her. And I long to talk to you about an hundred other things. Heigho! Adieu.

* Her youngest sister, Mary, afterwards wife of Andrew Douglas, M. D.

LETTER XXIX.

Deal, *June* 27, 1761.

INDEED, my dear Mrs. Montagu, you either designed to write me a letter which you never wrote, or if you really did write it, I was so unlucky as never to receive it, for not one syllable did you mention about going to Sandleford in your last from London. But my fears are at length happily over, by the good account you give of your health, and notwithstanding all my resolutions to quarrel with you, I am in too much good humour from the hopes of coming to you at Tunbridge to set heartily about it.

My sister was in a mortal vexation, at the apprehension of my being prevented from waiting on you, by her going to Bristol, and in spite of all my remonstrances, would talk with my father about it, and he was far enough from shewing the least inclination that I should be prevented; but on the contrary, declared he should not want me, and that by all means he would have me go whenever you would be so good to summon me; so such as I am, *me voici a votre service.* I should have writ you this to me important intelligence by the last post, but as I thought it might pass

pass you on the road, I checked my impatience till now. I am happy to say, I am not limited to the ten days I so anxiously wished for, and I hope not to be such a poor animal as I have been almost ever since I saw you; perhaps the change of air may do my head good; I am sure the sight of you will do my heart good, and that is to myself by much the principal object.—I could lampoon the postman, for he has certainly purloined a letter, do let him be severely interrogated, for I am by no means reconciled to my loss. Don't forget that you are to take Virgil to Tunbridge. How we shall enjoy ourselves! the very thought of it does me good; you may therefore judge what I have to hope from the reality.

Can there possibly be any truth in the shocking report, that Lord B——* has employed the highest degree of human understanding to no better purposes than an attempt to prove the owner of it a beast! Whether true or false, the report puts me in mind of some very fine lines of Akenside's.

> Can art, alas! or genius guide the head
> When truth and freedom from the heart are fled?
> Can lesser wheels repeat their native stroke,
> When the prime function of the soul is broke?

* Probably Bolingbroke.

But I must finish, or I shall be too late for the post; I have not expressed half the delight I feel at the thoughts of seeing you so soon. I am sure it must be very inconvenient to you to send your equipage all the way to Deal, but in you next pray name at what place I shall meet it, and I will take my measures accordingly. Adieu!

LETTER XXX.

Wingham, *September* 1, 1761.

Though I am not yet absolutely to the end of my journey, I know you will be glad, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to hear that I am arrived within twelve miles of it. I got to Canterbury yesterday between four and five, so that I might very well have gone on to Deal, which, in pursuance of a marvellous inclination which I always feel to go strait forward, I was strongly tempted to do. However, as there was no absolute necessity for all this hurry, and as I knew Mrs. Nairn would have some expectation of seeing me, I contented myself with proceeding no further than this place. The weather was very favorable to me yesterday, the roads very safe, and the

the horses and postillions very quiet and tractable, so that I had not the least terror during the whole journey.

If I had not found employment enough for my thoughts, without the assistance of a book, they must have been lamentably at a loss, as the excessive roughness of the roads made it quite impossible for me to read. I need not tell you, for I am sure you feel it, how much I longed for you to share with me in every view that pleased me; but there was one of striking beauty that I was half wild with impatience at your being so many miles distant. To be sure the wise people, and the gay people, and the silly people of this worky-day world, and for the matter of that all the people but you and I, would laugh to hear that this object I was so undone at your not seeing, was no other than a single honey-suckle. It grew in a shady lane, and was surrounded by the deepest verdure, while its own figure and coloring, which were quite perfect, were illuminated by a ray of sunshine. There are some common objects, sometimes placed in such a situation, viewed in such a light, and attended by such accompaniments as to be seen but once in a whole life, and to give one a pleasure entirely new; and this was one of them, and I firmly believe there was no such honey-suckle ever existing

ing in the world before. Do pray think how vexatious it must have been to me, to enjoy it without you; and tell me, if you can, of some equally singular beauty, which you met with in your road to London, to make me amends.

I was prevented finishing my letter at Wingham, and was too late for the post here; where I found all my family and friends, thank God, very well for valetudinarian people, and none of them unnatural enough to express any sorrow at my return, but Mrs. Underdown, who is many degrees more hard-hearted than Crab; she has just left me, and charged me to make you her very profound respects, with a vast deal more, implying that she thinks me such a rarity as nobody deserves but you. As my head is pretty confused with my late jumbling, and I cannot very precisely tell whether you or I have the greater share in this compliment, I repeat it, for fear of your being defrauded by the concealment. Indeed, I am afraid, considering the partiality of the speaker, all that can be gathered from it to my advantage, is, that you are a great deal better to me than I deserve, with which I have humility enough to be contented.

I want words, my dear friend, to express my sense of what I owe, first to Heaven, and then to you, for so much happiness as I have enjoyed

for these last delightful seven weeks. When I came to you indeed, you had taught me to form expectations of growing happier than I had been for some time before; for could I be happy with those I most loved suffering from sickness and sorrow around me? I therefore, hardly dared to hope for the happiness you promised me; but, contrary to the complaints which one so often hears in this world, I found all my expectations exceeded. I have innumerable obligations to you of every kind, but none that I feel so deeply as the assurance of your affection for me, an advantage of which I am more sensible than ever, in proportion as I have had more intimate opportunities of growing acquainted with its value. I need not, I am sure, tell you what a strange vacancy I have found in every day, since we parted; but perhaps such a happiness as I have lately enjoyed ought not to last very long; the reflection on it will be sufficient to enliven, for a long while, the dull occurrences of common life, and I will return to my farthing quadrille without complaint or pouting, and be thankful God has blessed me with such a home, and such home friends, who, though they want the elegant brilliancy of my dearest Mrs. Montagu, are kind, good, and truly affectionate to me.

Do not forget that you are to enquire very par-

particularly into the state of the house from which you are to see the coronation. I am summoned to dinner, so can only add the assurance of my being, with the sincerest gratitude and inexpressible affection,

Your's, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

Deal, *September* 25, 1761.

How greatly am I obliged to you, my dear friend, for not persisting in your contradiction of an inclination so very favorable to me, and really very harmless in itself, however untoward it might appear to the lamentable solicitude of poor Mrs. Whalley, who, no doubt, cries and blesses herself at your inattention to her cares, and will never more be in charity either with the honeysuckles or me. But, in spite of Mrs. Whalley's inundation of tears, I am persuaded it must do you a great deal of good to gather honeysuckles, and no manner of hurt to be visited by an inclination to write to me.

I am immoderately scandalized at your finding the least difficulty to conceive my wishing for

your

your company upon any occasion. I should certainly have wished it, even if I had been engaged in all the fine reasonings you suppose, as you certainly would have assisted me to improve them. But indeed no such reasonings had I; nor did I once dream of herrings or shrimps, in my fine moon-light view of the sea. But the scene was enchantingly beautiful, I felt it at my heart, and how could I feel any thing at my heart, in which you had not a share?

I rejoice extremely in your account of my Lord Bath's looks, and still more in your account of his virtues, and I sincerely join with you in an earnest wish that it may please God to grant him still some years for the exercise and improvement of them. The date of human life will not alas allow one to wish for many! But with his talents and opportunities much may be done in a few, if those few are happily employed. I am glad to find he is so pleased with Dr. Young; there are some stanzas which must be particularly affecting, and I hope are useful to him. In the midst of one's esteem, and love for such a character so amiable as my Lord Bath's, it is painful to reflect how his virtue must have been entangled in the maze of political contention. The enthusiasm of patriotism, like every other enthusiasm, is a wild guide; and the private pas-

sions

sions operating upon the transactions of public life make a very perplexed account. But heaven has favored our noble friend with many years of calm vacation from the turbulence of the world *, which affords him the inestimable opportunity of overlooking its errors, and setting them right. I am just now made very happy by the account of your having got safe from the coronation, for which I owe you a thousand thanks. I hope to hear in your next that you have taken no cold. We have had a letter from my Brother likewise, he and Harry and all their company, thank God, are likewise safe; I have not as yet heard that any mischief happened to any body, which is quite wonderful in such crouds as there must have been. My brother sent for Harry on Saturday, but by some accident he did not get the letter till Sunday evening, and he immediately mounted his horse and rode all night, on such an occasion who would not!

I have lately received a piece of intelligence that gives me very great concern: I know you will be very sorry to hear that Mr. Chapone is

* See Mrs. Carter's verses to Lord Bath, in the Collection of her Poems, in which some of these ideas appear in a different shape. It may perhaps be difficult to decide whether her pr se or her verse, upon this subject, be most beautifully expressed.

dead.

dead. This was a match of such entire affection, and a plan of happiness which had been concerting for so many years, that one cannot imagine a more melancholy separation. My poor friend is enabled, God be thanked, to behave upon this trying occasion, in a manner conformable to the excellence of her character and principles, and is absolutely calm and resigned. But with so much strength of affection and weakness of constitution, it is much to be dreaded what effect so terrible a shock may have upon her health. I first had this news from Tunbridge from the Miss Burrows's, who came there a few days after we left. I wish they had come sooner, as I should have had a real pleasure in introducing them to you there, as a family distinguished by a most undeviating rectitude of principle, and by an indefatigable activity of virtue. Miss Burrows left Tunbridge as soon as she heard of Mrs. Chapone's sad situation, and has been with her ever since, of which I am extremely glad.

My sister Mary is to leave Bristol on Friday, and will I hope be in town on Saturday evening, but by that time probably you will be flown into Berkshire. My brother called on you on Saturday, I did not know when he left Deal, that you were gone into the country. I hope you will soon be able to assure me you have taken no cold

at the coronation, for I do not much like the thoughts of your being upon the water at night after not being very cool, I suppose for the whole day.—Adieu, my dear Mrs. Montagu.

LETTER XXXII.

Deal, *October* 2, 1761.

As it was not till last night that I received your letter, I should have been very impatient at the uncertainty of knowing how you did, my dear Mrs. Montagu, after the coronation, if I had not inferred that you were tolerably well, by hearing from Miss Talbot that you had been doing mischief at Lambeth, in which I dare say she was perfectly well disposed to aid and abet you. I am much obliged to you for so kindly wishing me to share the coronation with you. Indeed I did very heartily wish to be there; and it was no apprehension of hazard or fatigue that kept me from it. You, I know, distinguish too exactly, to think a strong inclination for a sight of this splendid ceremony at all inconsistent with my general abomination of finery. Show and parade on great and solemn occasions always

always strike and elevate us, and it is upon these occasions only that they seem to be introduced with propriety. The decorations of private life should, I think, be formed upon the principles of simplicity and elegance, and must have a certain air of ease and familiarity to render them agreeable. High rank and power require every external aid of pomp and *éclat*, that may awe and astonish spectators, by the ideas of the magnificent and sublime: while the ornaments of more equal conditions should be adapted to the quiet tenour of general life, and be content to charm and engage by the gentler graces of the beautiful and the pleasing.

I exceedingly rejoice in the account you give me of the behaviour of the king, and I am very industrious in circulating all I hear to his honor; and God be thanked one hears nothing but what is so, among all his good subjects, with whom I have any conversation.

I am indeed extremely obliged to my Lord Bath for his very kind intentions to me *, and

* The Editor does not know what these kind intentions were. They could not refer to any legacy which his Lordship might have intended to leave Mrs. Carter, because when Mr. afterwards Sir William Pulteney, so generously settled £100 a year upon her, she declared to him, that Lord Bath had never intimated any such intention towards her.

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independant of my own particular obligations, I am happy in every instance that contradicts that wicked injustice with which the world has in some respects treated so noble and so amiable a character. If his Lordship knows that you have mentioned his design, I beg you will be so good to make my most grateful acknowledgments to him. I do thank you for your tenderness to my "qualms and squeamishnesses," and should thank you exceedingly, indeed, if you would extend it so far as to save me from the confusion of this publication *. But, alas, here you are absolutely obdurate, and my lamentable entreaties make no more impression on you

"Quam si dura Silex, aut stet Marpesia fautes."

I have not heard the result of the consultation at Lambeth; but I have no great hopes of a *veto* from thence. I need not tell you that with all my reluctance, I have not tried to engage Miss Talbot on my side, but have left her to her own judgment.

My sister was very unlucky in the general forgetfulness of Devonshire Street, but much obliged to you for your intention; I hope she will be more fortunate at your return, as I imagine she will

* Of her Poems.

continue

continue in town till after that time, and if it agrees with her, I hope she will. I go on mighty well, a little more confined perhaps than I should absolutely chuse; but then I dispatch a deal of plain work, and read a world of Greek. I have just finished Thucydides. Did you ever read his history of the Peloponnesian War? and does not it always fill you with detestation and horror to find, throughout the whole course of it, the polite, the enlightened, and philosophical Greeks, perpetually engaged in scenes of more brutal cruelty, than perhaps were ever acted by the most savage parties of scalping Indians? Your friend Cicero has told you that Thucydides is often very obscure and crabbed, so I am going to recreate myself, after this hard task, by reading Xenophon's Anabasis.

I owe you a thousand thanks for speaking to Lady F. Coningsby, and for your intention of writing to the Bishop of London. I am sorry to hear Lady F. looks so ill, I hope you executed your design of breakfasting with her on Monday, as I am sure it would do her good.

Since I began this letter, I have the favor of yours from Sandleford, and am heartily grieved for the poor Black Prince. However I hope your goodness for him will not be too late, and I write to your porter to day, to give him all the infor-

information I can where to enquire for him. I am pretty sure he must be heard of at Whitehall, and have described the place where he used to sit. I think I never knew of any other abode he had: if I did, most probably it was set down in the card of which, to the best of my remembrance, I left a copy with you.

I am very happy in the thoughts of my Lord Bath being at Sandleford with you, I beg my most respectful compliments to him, and am, &c.

LETTER XXXIII.

Deal, *October* 8, 1761.

Last night I had a letter from Miss Talbot which contains no absolute objection from Lambeth to printing the manuscript; therefore I beg leave to trouble you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, to let me know in what manner you would have me proceed. Shall it be printed in octavo? Shall I send the manuscript to you as soon as I have transcribed it? You talk of being in town the first week in November, and as it will not be long in printing, I suppose that will be early enough for it to be set about, and I think you said

said the proofs might be sent to you, and you would convey them to me. I ask all these questions, and shall want answers to several which I cannot now think on, upon a supposition that you continue in the same mind. If you have relented, and have brought over my Lord Bath, I shall be heartily glad: if not, I will, when I receive your determination, get over my scruples as well as I can, and follow the directions which you give me. I will, when I have heard from you, write to Mr. Rivington, to speak to Mrs. Richardson, that the printing may be executed as soon as possible after the manuscript is ready. I think you said you would have the things in prose printed too. Is my Lord Bath at Sandleford still? If I was sure he was not, I would send my love; but as I hope he is, I content myself with begging my very respectful compliments to his Lordship.

I have just found a prize, an Italian book in prose, worth reading. Did you ever meet with a pretty history of Venice?—We have strange news about strange alterations among great people. How is it all come about? But you will tell me nothing but about the manuscript; and I will tell you nothing at present, but what you know very well already, that I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

Deal, *October* 14, 1761.

By this time, possibly, my dear friend, you may begin to conclude that, by neglecting your prudent advice for the preservation of my fingers, that I have absolutely lost the use of them. But, indeed, I was very little able to thank you for your letter for some days after I received it; and all I could do was to write a few lines to my Lord Bath. Do not be at all uneasy about me, for I have had no kind of fever, only such a severe fit of the head-ach, that I did not get over it for a week, and it so shook my frippery system, that I have been absolutely good for nothing. I hope I am now growing better. I should not say so much about it, but I believe you will admit it as a reasonable excuse for my not going on so fast as you might expect with my task of transcribing. I have done as you bid me however, in one instance, and thrown away all my lamentations, after struggling as long as I could to no purpose. I am now determined to consider this publication, no longer as an affair of mine, but as entirely belonging to you and the

the two noble Lords *, so if the world thinks me absurd and vain, you are all engaged to maintain my quarrel. To be sure I should be mighty glad to print and publish, if I could apply your quotation to my verses; but I shall be perfectly well satisfied, if you will apply what precedes it, to their author. *Hanc non ego diligam? non omni ratione defendendam putem?*

I am very happy in the account you gave me, of the pleasure you received from my Lord Bath's visit. Your description of the Doctor † is admirable. He is no doubt an excellent harlequin, yet I cannot help regretting his being with you the whole time, as he must often have most vexatiously prevented a serious dialogue; and though such a character gives a very agreeable diversity to conversation, one is tired to death by a long succession of tricks.

I owe you a thousand thanks for writing to the Bishop of London. I have never been able to see Mrs. Pennington since I was favored with your letter; I was so languid I was afraid to venture to her through this very bad weather, though I was impatient to see her as she has not been well, and I long besides to let her know the favor you had done her. The prospect of

* Bath and Lyttelton.

† Probably Dr. Mounsey.

increasing her family has vanished for the present, but I thank God she has not been in danger from it, and is now much better. You need not quarrel with my plain work, for it has never prevented my using exercise, which I have constantly done till this deluge of rain, and my worthless head kept me quiet. I am under no other confinement than that I very seldom visit my neighbours, as I do not love to leave my father and Harry to pour out their own tea. Oh! Harry has been turning you a most creditable looking wooden snuff-box, for the clumsiness of the other has sat very grievously upon his mind, ever since he heard it had the honor of being in your possession.

Mrs. Underdown is extremely flattered by your kind mention of her, and desires her most respectful compliments. She has been for this last week engaged in a melancholy scene, from every hour's expectation of the death of Dr. Primrose *. He was released on Friday from the languid remains of a life which for some time has been incapable of any enjoyment. Mrs. Underdown has for a great while given up every more cheerful engagement to the endeavour of amusing this good man in a very infirm state of

* Her brother-in-law.

health

health and spirits; and she will feel a joy in the reflection on such an employment, that will more than repay her, for the want of gayer hours.

To my shame be it spoken I have the favor of a second letter from you, before I have thanked you for the first, you are extremely good to think of poor Mrs. Talbot *, and I have writ to her to day to acquaint her with your kind offer. As I do not know whether she is at Canterbury or Margate, my letter may not reach her immediately, but as soon as ever I receive her answer, I will let you know. I hope she is not so unlucky as to be engaged, as I am persuaded nothing could render her situation so happy as being placed with you. I am heartily sorry, though not at all surprised, that poor Mrs. Susan has obliged you to deprive her of this great advantage. The future care you design still to take of her, is perfectly worthy of you, and it is to be hoped the poor girl will grow wise enough to make the proper use of it. I am heartily grieved for the uneasiness this unlucky affair gives you: but surely, my dear friend, you ought not to charge yourself with consequences, in which you have no concern; every right action is registered in heaven, and there remains independant on the

* Obviously not Miss Talbot's mother, but some person in a menial situation.

wrong

wrong uses that may be made of it by those for whose benefit it was designed. Besides, the behaviour of human creatures, is perhaps much less often influenced by difference of situation, than we are apt to imagine; and this very person might have been just as weak and unhappy if you had, as you wish, left her where you found her. The rustic language of the plough-boy, or the waggoner's mate, might have been just as seducing to the awkward girl in a rugged cottage, as the more courtly address of the spruce powdered footman, to the more delicate ear of the Lady's maid. But however this be; as I am persuaded you took her under your protection with the kindest intentions, and have endeavoured to furnish her with the only principles that could secure her conduct and her happiness, there is surely no reason for you to suffer any anxiety on your own account, though it is impossible to a heart like yours, not to be affected by the misery which her unhappy imprudence has brought upon herself. I long to know how you are likely to proceed in procuring her a protection; and I shall be very impatient till I know whether your mind is more at ease, for I am alarmed at your want of sleep, I am sure your health must be hurt by two such miserable nights. I have been tolerably quiet all the while I knew you well

well and happy, but I have longed inexpressibly to be placed in some key-hole at Sandleford, ever since I received your last letter. The next I hope will make me happy by an account of your being more at rest.

I am sorry for all this bustle in the state; you know I had much set my heart on Mr. Pitt's remaining till the conclusion of the war. But what have I to do with politics! Heaven direct our governors for the best!

I will go on transcribing as fast as my head will let me, and revise and correct as well as I can. You talked at Tunbridge that the prose should be printed too, are you still in the same mind. However I will write it, and when you have the manuscript to look over, conclude just as you like best. I have been thinking since I wrote to you, that a duodecimo will be the prettiest size, and I fancy there is enough to make it for all the world like a book, though it will be most meritoriously small.

My sister Mary has a bad cold, and seems so tired of it, that I believe she will soon leave it. I could fret heartily, she was so unlucky to get there just at the time when it was scarcely possible for her to wait on you. A physician in London has told her she is in no danger of a consumption; God grant that he may be in the right;

right; but this has long been my great terror. I shall certainly be rejoiced to see her, yet I was in hopes, she would have been amused by making some stay between London and Edmonton. I did not, I believe, propose to come to town till February, but you have, by some means or other, so accustomed me to call it January, that I am entirely in your way of thinking, and if nothing unforeseen prevents me, I fully design to set out pretty early in the month. By that time I shall have done all my little odd business, and sufficed myself by a sight of all my friends. Adieu, the sun shines, and I am going to venture to Mongeham, to see Mrs. Pennington, but will seal my letter for fear I should not return early enough for the post. Adieu, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

Deal, October 28, 1761.

I INCLOSE you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, a letter from Mrs. Talbot, by which you will see how happy she is at the prospect you were so good as to give her. Whenever you would have her attend you, if you will favor me with your commands,

commands, I will take care to convey them to her.

I have some enquiries to trouble you with on a point of dress, and I wish I may not be too wooden-headed to render myself intelligible. It is concerning a widow's first gown, in what fashion it is to be made, and whether there are to be any plaits in the back. I know I asked you some questions of this kind once before for one of my friends, but I have most ingeniously forgot all that you told me about it. I wished for you extremely this morning, when I was walking, and enjoying the gradual illumination of objects by the opening day. To make me amends for your losing this fine sight, I hoped you were reposing in quiet sleep; and were entertained by pleasing dreams. You mention nothing of your going to Bath, have you altered that part of your scheme? If not, remember Mr. Collins.

I need not tell you, my dear friend, how happy I am, in your approbation of the Ode. Shall I prefix your name to it or not*? I am a little afraid the second stanza may give some offence to the good people upon the pantiles, who may not find out its meaning without this significa-

* Mrs. Montagu's name is prefixed to it in the first edition of Mrs. Carter's works, published after her decease, by the present Editor.

tion:

tion: though most people, I think, who know us, can be in little doubt to whom it is addrest. I shall put no names to any of the rest, except my Lord Bath's. So tell me what you would have me do, and I will proceed accordingly. I begin to wonder that I hear nothing from Mr. Rivington; I hoped to have received a proof before this time, and I begin to be very impatient to have it all over.

I grieved to find your scheme of tea drinking and quiet so disconcerted by the genius of Mr. Gibbs. To let in a wit upon an aching head was an excellent stroke of his cleverness. Why did not you tell me explicitly that this head-ach was quite gone in your letter last night? Be so good as to mention it particularly in your next.

I greatly rejoice to hear that my Lord Lyttelton is better; the bark, it is to be hoped, will quite subdue his ague. I dont like my Lord Bath's attack any better than you do; and his calling it *vapours*, gives one no more satisfaction than if he called it a drum or a trumpet. Your apprehensions about it, alas, have a meaning; and I hope you will prevail on him to consult a physician. A little bleeding surely could do no hurt, and might prevent a fatal consequence. But I do not mean to prescribe, but do pray prevail

vail on him, for you can, to apply to somebody who can prescribe with judgment.

I took poor Sukey out with me yesterday to shew her the ships and the very fine landscapes within view of this place, and she seemed much delighted. I delivered your message to her, and it did me good, to see how happy she looked. She desired me when I writ, to send you her duty. Mrs. Primrose has given her leave to walk in her garden, which is just opposite to Mrs. Green's, where she will get some air. The poor girl cannot be prevailed on to go, when Mrs. Primrose is at home, but I went the other day and told her she was out, and she went immediately. Indeed she behaves very prettily, and seems to be of such a disposition, that any little notice that is taken of her will do her good, and help to confirm her in a future right conduct. I feel great compassion for the sad state into which she has been betrayed, by an artless weak nature: but am as much provoked as you can be, by what you justly call the servile nonsense of a much higher understanding. Alas, my dear friend, how wretchedly contemptible are the finest parts, when unconducted by principle, and thus infamously prostituted to the world. How vexatious it is to see a mind, capable of such noble improvements, so sunk and debased by this

vile

vile idolatry. It grieves one particularly to find how much she has been hurt by the success in which we so warmly rejoiced; for in how different a character did this very person appear, when her spirits were sobered, and her heart softened by affliction. How much this calm interval has been improved into a foundation of reasonable happiness for the remainder of her life! But every prospect of tranquillity now seems to be vanished, and all is tumult, and agitation, and folly.

My sister and I are both extremely obliged by your kind enquiries. She is, thank God, a great deal better; Mrs. Underdown is very happy in your message to her, she is indeed very industrious to turn me out of Deal, as fast as she can, and insists upon it you are my best remedy; nothing I hope will prevent my coming to town early in January.

Will my Lord Lyttelton permit me the honor to print his name with the verses*? Do if you can procure this for me. I think they should not be introduced without some little preface. Do you approve of what I inclose? It is really true, for I have much greater pride in any approbation from my Lord Lyttelton's character, than

* Prefixed to her Poems.

in

in the highest encomium from his genius, though I am very sensible of its excellence. I am mighty indifferent about printing or not printing my name, so decide as you like best.

Pray take care of your eyes, and do not read till the inflammation is perfectly gone. My head is not good, but better than it was. I beg you will write me only a line or two till your eyes are quite well.—Adieu.

LETTER XXXVI.

Deal, *November* 10, 1761.

I am very happy, my dear friend, in your approbation of the verses, which greatly exceeds my own opinion of them, which was properly no opinion at all, for I generally find the *nonum primatur in annum*, a mighty necessary rule, to enable me to form any judgment of my own trifles in rhyme. If you will explain what you think necessary to be said in another stanza, I will try to add it, but I really cannot tell whether it will be in my power. Does not the word *late* in the last stanza in some degree obviate your objection *.

* In the Poem addressed to the Earl of Bath.

I am

I am a wretch if your coach has returned, and has jumbled you to Devonshire-street, that I did not tell you my sister Mary was at Deal; I remember I did tell you that London did not agree with her, and that I feared she would not be so happy as to see you. I write immediately in hopes of preventing your journey into the city, and to beg your pardon if it is already accomplished.

I inclose you the Ode, and beg you will not fail to admire the hand writing, for to be sure it is marvellously pretty, I heartily wish there may be any thing else in it worth admiring; but of this I am no judge, and as it is addrest to the person whom you declare in your last letter, that you love better than any body, you may be a partial judge. However, whether partial or impartial, as your judgment is what I am principally concerned in, it shall either be printed or not as you decide, but let me know soon, for Mr. Rivington promises to have the work dispatched with all possible speed. Do you think what I have inclosed will do for the dedication? Do you rather chuse I should put my name to it? Pray tell me all about this, and every thing else that you think necessary; and be so good, not to forget to furnish me with a title, about which I am utterly at a loss.

Since

Since I began this letter I have the favor of another from you. You need not send the Ode to my Lord Bath, as I have a sort of a copy here which I will transcribe for the press; only if there should be any difference, be so good as to correct it when I send it, by that which you have. As you flatter me it has more merit than I apprehended, I wish you could contrive to let Miss Talbot see it before it is printed; I would send it to her myself, but out of mere idleness, am willing to save the trouble of transcribing. You will be so good as to desire her to say nothing of it, as it is so soon to appear in print.

As you say nothing of your stomach, I hope I may conclude it is quite easy. I am very sorry to find my Lord Lyttelton has been so ill, I hope you will soon be able to give a better account of his health. I am very happy in your goodness to the Black Prince, both upon his account and yours.

I have so little to do at present to conclude the manuscript, that it will not do me half the hurt that sewing and hemming would do you. I should have wished to have writ one or two more Odes, but my head is so often incapable of the least application, and I can never write without a good deal, that I can attempt nothing farther.

As

As you have given me an exemption from writing to my Lord Bath, I will depend upon you for expressing my acknowledgments to his Lordship, and I am very sure they will be expressed in the way most agreeable to himself, and most advantageous to me. You have not mentioned Miss Talbot to me this age. Have you been at Lambeth since your return to town? I had a letter from her last night, by which I find the Archbishop has been very ill; but I hope the worst is over. She tells me she has writ to you; but is most maliciously silent what it was about, and you are just as malicious and as silent as she is.

My head has held out very good to day, for which I am particularly obliged to it, as it is my father's birth-day, and all the family have been together. What very great reason have I for thankfulness, for the long continuance of the life of such a father, to whom I and all his children have such uncommon obligations!

Wednesday.

My head held out very well till eight o'clock last night, but the din of a good many voices at last subdued it, and Mrs. Underdown and my sisters charitably drove me to bed. I have not much

much to say for it to-day, but I hope I shall be able to keep up. When shall I hear from you? I long to know whether your spirits are better and your mind more at ease. Have you seen my brother? And have you got the little ball of knotting? His head is so full I imagine at present of another affair, that probably he may have forgot his intention of waiting on you. I hope there is a prospect of his marrying; but I know not whether it is determined. I never saw the lady but once; but I hear a very good account of her. I cannot see a word I write. Adieu, pray let me hear from you soon.

LETTER XXXVII.

Deal, *November* 26, 1761.

I WAS beginning to grow very impatient to hear from you, my dear friend, for I did not at all like your head-ach; but your letter last night, has made me very happy by an account of its removal. I am afraid you will be hurt by going so constantly to Lady Pomfret, and yet I know not how you can avoid it. With the melancholy circumstances of such a scene, there is certainly

mixed a high degree of pleasure, from the view of so noble a behaviour. But such a variety of engagements is the strongest exercise of the spirits; and your's, I fear, will suffer greatly from it. I hope you take the air, whenever the weather is tolerable.

I am extremely obliged to my Lord Bath. Be so good as to let me know, in your next, whether I may not write to him upon that subject. As I shall not want any money here, I beg the favor of you to keep it for me till I come to town; unless I should first want it to pay for the printing the manuscript, and in that case, I will trouble you with a commission. You have not told me whether any thing is to be done about the Ode to my Lord Bath; if it is to be printed, I am now come to the place where it is to be stuck into the manuscript; if not, I will send you the remainder of the sheets very soon. I have another dab of an Ode, which I have often been going to send you, and as often prevented, by thinking it good for nothing; however, if I can bring myself to render it legible, you shall see it.

You need be in no pain about the manuscript, I have heard from Mr. Rivington, and received part of it in print. I have sent the proof back to have some things which I did not like in the impres-

impression altered. I hope it will now soon be finished. I am to send the remainder of the copy immediately to Mr. Rivington, to save time. I have desired him, as the sheets are printed off fair, to send you a copy, that you may see how it goes on. I had desired him to send you the proofs, but I suppose he thinks that would lengthen the time. I am greatly obliged to my Lord Lyttelton for allowing me the honor of publishing his name. His Lordship mentioned a motto, at Tunbridge; do you remember what it was? I can only recollect, that I liked it extremely, only was afraid of its being too magnificent for my poor little volume. If you know what it was, be so good as to send it me by the next post, or I shall have dispatched the whole to Mr. Rivington; and I cannot think of any motto that pleases me.

I am glad my brother was so lucky to meet you at home, though I believe he must be extremely puzzled to answer your ten thousand questions about me, as he has been so little at Deal, since I came from Tunbridge, that he does not know much about me. However, he has not given a worse character of my head than it deserves, and I am by no means disposed to vindicate it just now, as it has already, this week, sent me to bed two days out of three. But do not think all the good effects of Tunbridge is vanished, for I have

had no fever ever since, and my nerves continue very comfortable. I shall have fairly got rid of my manuscript this week, and hope, by being very idle, to be a little more at ease. Mrs. Underdown tells me, she charged my brother to let you know, I should be in town by the 1st of January. A wretch, to shew so little tenderness for my precious neck, as to send me to travel in dark nights. But for your sake and my own, I shall be more careful of it, and defer my journey some days longer, when there will be a pretty moon. By that time, I hope, the thing will have been published long enough for me to feel no concern about it; as soon as the manuscript is fairly out of my hands, I propose walking a great deal, and try to get my head into a better capacity of enjoying the happiness of conversing with you, than it is at present Next week, I intend to write to my good friend, Mrs. Norman, to engage my lodging, for I shall be undone if any body else seizes it. My brother writes with great admiration of my Lord Bath's picture, and thinks it extremely like, which I was very glad to hear. There is another picture, which I should be very happy to see, extremely like, and which nothing but a fear of teazing the original, prevents my mentioning in every letter I write.—Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Deal, *December* 21, 1761.

By this time, I imagine, the printing is finished; there are to be a thousand copies; many more, I fancy, than will ever be sold*. I have desired Mr. Rivington to send you twelve copies bound, and I enclose you a list of their destination, if you will be so good as to distribute them, which I think you told me you would. I have set down only ten names, so you will dispose of the remaining two in what manner you think proper, as it is very possible that, in the confusion of my head, I may have forgot somebody who ought to have been remembered. I have ordered some to Lambeth, the Bishop of London, and one or two more.

I have had a letter from Mrs. Norman, whose lodgings are at present engaged, but she thinks will soon be at liberty, and though I should be

* Mrs. Carter's modest estimate of her own genius, led her to form a very mistaken opinion of this valuable little Collection of Poems. There were several editions of them published in her life-time; and three editions of them, appended to the Memoirs of her Life, have been published since her death, by the present Editor.

heartily

heartily glad if I could come at the time I have fixed, had rather wait a little longer, than go to a new place, as that is so perfectly convenient to me in all respects, and I have always had so much reason to be pleased with my treatment from these good people. I should be glad, however, if you would be so good as to commission Mrs. Whalley, in her travels up and down the cities of London and Westminster, to call and enquire when there is a probability that the present lodgers may decamp.

You reproach me most unjustly for not having given you an account of a certain head, which is so finely decorated, and makes so very pretty a figure in your letter, that I am mighty sorry to be obliged to disown my having any acquaintance with it; but there is another poor silly head of which I have a more perfect knowledge, and about which, I really believe, you meant to enquire, and which I avoided mentioning to you, merely because I could say nothing about it that would give you any pleasure. Indeed it is in a very bad way, but I am trying to mend it.

I beg your pardon for not mentioning Fingal which I admire as much as you would have me, and promised myself great pleasure, while I was reading it, in looking over it with you, though I am incapable of talking it over at present. I

want

want to read it again, but my sister has got it in her possession.

I do not wonder you are angry with poor Lady Pomfret's physician. It is indeed a strange want of feeling to expose a dying person to the painful circumstance of having the last languid hours of life, harassed by the fatigues of a journey, and the tumult of an inn.

Monday.

My head sent me to bed again yesterday, before I had finished my letter, and since then I have another to thank you for. You see, by the account which I have given of myself, that it is not my fault, that there is so much difficulty in getting a sheet of paper from me—Mr. Rivington must answer for himself.

The rumour of a war with Spain reached us very soon, by the packet landing here, but still I hope it might be like other ship intelligence.

I am glad that Miss Talbot recommends Mrs. Collier; I believe I know very well who she is. She formerly wrote some letters from Felicia to Charlotte. I was a little acquainted with her, before she was married, but have never seen her but once since. I never heard any thing to her disad-

vantage,

vantage, and writing for the support of her family is a laudable employment.

I am immeasurably scandalized at the supposition of my burning your letters; and if I had the spirit of our friend, Mrs. Howe, I would exert it in the censure of such affectation. I return the letter you mention, but with a reliance upon your honor, that I shall have it again. I am heartily vexed at any delay of my coming to town, for which I begin to grow as impatient as an aching head will suffer me to be; and which will only allow me to assure you, my dear friend, that I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

Deal, *May* 14, 1762.

You will be glad to hear, my dear friend, that I am arrived safely to the end of my journey, and have the great blessing of finding all my friends very well. I am a good deal harassed and tired; but this will soon go off, and in a day or two, I hope to get my head settled, which is, at present, in an uncomfortable state of rotation;

rotation; but I would not omit writing to-day, as I knew you would be uneasy, not to receive some account of me.

My head is so confused that I cannot thank you as I wish to do, for the many hours of happiness which I have passed with you for these last four charming months. Indeed, I write merely to let you know I am safe, and except the agitation of the journey, well. I have set my heart upon hearing from you this evening, which, I hope, will make me happy by an account that your spasms are entirely gone, and that you have no worse pain than, what I heartily hope you will never get rid of, the wish of seeing your most affectionate and faithful friend.

LETTER XL.

Deal, *May* 17, 1762.

I FEEL myself obliged to you, my dear friend, for your first letter that was writ in a crowd, because it satisfied my impatience to know how you did; and because it proved that, while you were surrounded by wise people, and great people, and good people, and all manner of

of people, that might pretend to a right of excluding me, at that time, from your thoughts, you could, however, find a place for me there. But still I longed to have you *tête-à-tête* in your dressing-room, talking from your heart, talking only to me, and talking that language of partial affection, which you have taught me to expect to hear. Your letter last night kindly answered all my wishes, and gave me that pleasure which I always feel from every testimony of your affection.

The fresh air, and the philosophical amusements of the country, for which you so ardently long, will soon, I hope, improve the present negative state of your health to active spirit and joy. It was merely the absence of this sunshine which probably suggested that gloomy doubt in your letter, at which I could not help sighing, though I hope it is a groundless apprehension. I am extremely unwilling to believe, that it should be at all likely for either of us to experience such a damp of age as will totally extinguish all enthusiasm for rural pleasures, or render us cold and indifferent to the sight of each other. Though the riotous spirits of youth may be necessary to the extravagance of passion, and the pursuits of vice; it seems to have very little concern in the gentle emotions of poetical and intel-

intellectual pleasure, or the delicate sensibilities of the heart.

Parlo di quell' Amor chi non à l'Ali.

The leagues of ambition, of whim, or of thoughtless amusements, must be fickle and uncertain as the principles on which they are formed, and as the objects which they pursue: but that union of affection which is supported by mutual assistance in the tasks of duty, instead of growing weaker must be more strongly cemented by added years, and the continued progress of improving virtue. It is sanctified by the approbation of heaven, and held by "the rivet of eternity." Our friendship, I hope, will always be of this kind, and while it takes immortal aims, surely we shall have no reason to apprehend its decay.

I grieve to hear that poor Mrs. Donellan is in so suffering a state, and I grieve to think what you feel on her account. In such a moment of dejection as that in which you were mentioning a departing friend, it is no wonder you should be struck by the melancholy reflection, that from attachments the greatest evils arise. But surely the few hours of evil which we feel from tender anxieties, are not to be set against the days and

years

years of good which we commonly enjoy from social engagements.

I rejoice to hear that my Lord Lyttelton is so well recovered; I beg my most respectful compliments to him and to my Lord Bath, who I hope has by this time perfectly recovered his cold. I am sorry to find you think Mrs. Boscawen in so joyless a state. Yet I hope, though she may have lost all taste for the bustle of the world, she may still enjoy many years of comfort and cheerfulness. My best compliments attend her and Mrs. Vesey, who, I fear to her sorrow, was perfectly cured of her prejudices about my silence before I left London.

Remember to send me Ossian: and remember too that you promised me to call as often as you could on Miss Talbot. I long to have you more acquainted with her excellencies, and I know it always gives her pleasure to see you. Thank God all my family here are well, and I hope I have a fair prospect of enjoying these summer months without alarm from my friends here, and then looking forward towards January with pleasing expectations of the continuance of that happiness, which heaven has granted me, in those who are now absent. Adieu! I am ever equally in all places

Your's, &c.

LETTER XLI.

Deal, *June* 1, 1762.

It was a great disappointment to me not to hear from you to-night my dearest friend; it may be unreasonable in me perhaps, but I cannot help being particularly solicitous about you at a time when so many people are ill. Pray be very careful of yourself; this illness is severe to those who have not strong health. The influenza is very much in this place.

I am very sorry to hear for your sake, and that of the rest of her friends, of the death of poor Mrs. Donellan. To herself it is a release from years of sickness to a state of eternal health; yet one always finds something to regret in the removal of good people, and one is justified from absolute selfishness by that mixture of comfort which Providence has mercifully allotted to every condition. Except in cases of violent pain life has always its attractions, and the weary passenger, though in sight of home, and travelling through a rough path, yet sees on either hand some flowery spot, or hears some tuneful note: and thus charmed by colour, and enli-

vened

vened by song, walks contentedly on without too impatient wishes for the end of the journey *.

June 6.

If I could have got half an hour of uninterrupted leisure, and activity enough to make use of it, I should not have so long delayed finishing this letter, nor thanking you, my dear friend, for your letter. But I have been as much engaged in a place where possibly you may think one has nothing to do but to sleep, as you can have been in all your bustle of court negociation. To say nothing of the impediments of my own silly head, which has been pretty frequent, many of my friends have been ill, and my mornings have been taken up with enquiring after them; and my brother and sister have engaged my sister Mary and me to assist at the ceremony of receiving their company in the afternoon. So that between solicitude and form, I have every evening found my spirits so worn down, that I have been very little able to attempt writing a letter. Most of my invalids are getting better. I did

* How truly poetical are these moral, or rather religious reflections! They will perhaps remind the reader of Prior's "Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die;" yet unless the Editor's partiality misleads him, the comparison will not be injurious to Mrs. Carter.

expect

expect Mrs. Underdown to be ill from the agitation her spirits must necessarily suffer from the first hurry of the wedding, though it is an event she has long earnestly wished, and most sincerely rejoices in; but it is impossible to avoid some painful feelings in such a situation *. None of my friends have alarmed me by any appearance of danger, except James Pennington †, who has been so bad as to give me great anxiety; he was better last night, but I am very uneasy about him, and his father and mother, who would be deeply affected at his loss; but I hope it will please God to spare them that trial.

I heartily wish you the quiet and the green fields which you so earnestly wish for.

Le beltà della Natura,
E i consigli del riposo.

There is a strange diversity in the wishes of this world, while you are longing to run away from courts and countesses, and sighing for the shades of Sandleford, the poor rusticated statesman is probably groaning after hurry and bustle, and a

* Mrs. Underdown was mother to Mr. Carter's first wife.

† This promising young man, the Editor's eldest brother, lingered on in constantly declining health till the age of twenty-one, and then died just as he had completed his education at Oxford.

crowded

crowded levee in town. I hope zephyrs will fly before you, and introduce the summer into Berkshire by the time you get there. A scowling north-east has suffered us to see very little of it in Kent. One day this week the wind changed, and made an astonishing alteration in the face of the country. But, alas! there was too much anxiety in my walk to see little Pennington, to suffer me to enjoy it, as I should otherwise have done. One can unite only

Alla puce degli affetti,
Le delizie della mente.

But one ought not to expect this peace to remain long uninterrupted in a world of perpetual change.

I long extremely to hear from you, to know how you do, and what you do, and where you are, for it seems such an age since I received any account of you, that my thoughts are quite at a loss where to follow you. I sometimes figure you perplexed with messages, and answering notes in your dressing room in Hill-street: and at others I place you under a tree at Sandleford, free from all the turmoils of this worky-day world, perfumed by roses and honeysuckles, serenaded by nightingales, and thinking on me, which probably you are more disposed to do while

while you are sitting among the flowers of the field, than when you are shining in a circle.

I rejoice to hear my Lord Lyttelton is so much better, and I hope he will be prevailed on to go to Bath; mineral waters are the only probable remedy for a constitution like his. I was obliged to you for your political news, which I kept a profound secret for the time you limited me without so much as whispering it, like Queen Midas, to the reeds. Adieu!

LETTER XLII.

Deal, *July* 8, 1762.

In the midst of such a variety of pleasing engagements, you were very good, my dear friend, to find an hour to bestow upon me, and by a very lively description to render me in some degree, a sharer in your adventures and amusements. I am persuaded that Hagley has all the real, and definable beauties of its own which you represent; but perhaps the *je ne sais quoi*, that you affirm impossible to describe, might not be more the operation of the three graces, than of the mere mortal men and women who formed

your society. I am much obliged to you for the account of your travels, and for the observations it was so natural for you to make upon the scenes which they presented to you, and which would have been made by so few people in the world besides. For want of some companion with that critical taste and glowing imagination, which give distinction and spirit to objects, I found myself very little improved or amused by the sight of Oxford and Blenheim, when I was there many years ago. I went with a set of very well meaning folks, but some of whom were dull, some were peevish, and some were in love; and most of them even in their natural state would have considered a consular statue of Cicero, and a waxen image of Queen Anne, in pretty much the same light, as merely something to look at. In short, as I had neither the aid of society, nor the freedom of my own solitary thoughts, I scarcely recollect any thing of the expedition, but that it made me heartily weary.

I am extremely obliged to you for wishing me of your party, which would have given every object so very different an air. I perfectly feel what I have lost in not enjoying the advantages you kindly wished me; and all I have to comfort me is, that no expedition could possibly make me happier than the expedition to Battle Abbey.

I ought

I ought to have acknowledged the favor of your letter sooner, but it found me in the midst of all the hurry and bustle of removing, with which I have been so much tired, that I know not yet how to set about any thing. We are now compleatly out of one house, but far enough from being fairly in another, and when we shall be quite settled can scarcely be guessed. Every body but myself seems pleased with the change, and if all the rest are happy in it, I shall very little regard my own particular dislike to the situation. If there was no other part of the town in which one could have a view of the sea, my own room would be very advantageously placed, as it is in every thing but motion an absolute cabin, and my prospect at this moment "*Aer undique, undique pontus**."

I should have been very happy in sharing your reflections over the tomb of Prince Arthur, and of Germanicus: and many a reflection was there to be made. There are few passages in history that leave a more melancholy impression, or

* Mrs. Carter soon became reconciled to her new house, and never after had a desire to quit it. By her kindness, the Editor succeeded to it after her decease; and he is now writing this note in the very room which she here describes, and which is only unlike a cabin in having one window looking directly upon the sea, and two towards the country.

afford a more striking lesson of the vanity of human virtue, and human greatness, when founded merely on human motives, than the death of poor Germanicus. Every thing great and good vanished from the last closing scene of his life, and all that remained was weak, impious, and vindictive *.

I hope you are not to stay long in London, but that I shall soon have the pleasure of hearing you are enjoying the summer at Sandleford. I regret those days which I have been obliged to pass in muddle and dust; but I hope soon to be able to pursue my rambles.

Poor Mrs. Williams is endeavouring to get a subscription to some Essays which are to be published next spring, in the hopes of being able to buy an annuity. She had this scheme some time ago, and then I hear you were so good as to procure her several subscribers. I am sure if it is in your power now to make any addition to the number, you will not need any solicitations from me †.

I am

* But this is judging Germanicus upon Christian principles, with which he had not the happiness of being acquainted. He looked forward with no hope of another life, and could therefore have no motive to forgive those who were the cause of his losing this.

† This is probably Mrs. Anne Williams, who published a small quarto volume of "Miscellanies in Prose and Verse"

I am told my Lord Bath writes one of the present political papers. I cannot hear which it is, nor shall I believe it, except upon better authority than that upon which I heard it affirmed.

Adieu! my dear friend.

LETTER XLIII.

Deal, *July* 2, 1762.

It was with great pleasure, my dear friend, that I accompanied you in your travels to the venerable ruins of castles distinguished by such interesting events in the history of our own country, which, call me as much a Goth as you please, will always have a more striking effect on my mind than any antiquities of Greece or Rome; and I must have visited every remarkable spot on British ground before I feel any curiosity to see the Tarpeian Rock, or the Tusculan Villa. I have often heard my sister describe Warwick and Kenilworth castles, and make the same honorable mention of the ivy that you do. I should

in 1766. Several of these are by Dr. Johnson; and so is the Advertisement, which apologizes for the delay of the publication.

have

have been very happy to have retraced the English annals with you, on the venerable spots which present every memorable transaction to one's mind in colours more vivid than those which strike one from merely reading the history in a closet. We should certainly have agreed extremely well in general, but I know not whether I might have been quite so charitable in my lamentation of the treachery of Warwick's confederates: it would be profanation to call it friendship betwixt such characters. What title had one who had prostituted great valor and great talents, and sacrificed every duty to pride, revenge, and caprice, to expect fidelity in leagues of guilt!

Though I believe nothing can be juster than your observation, that great part of the English history is rather a tissue of personal adventures, and catastrophes, than a series of political events*: it seems strange that this should be a

* But surely this is the case with *all* history during the dark ages. And the reason seems obvious; when the higher orders of society had no literary education, the consequence was that they thought little, and fought much. Hence politics in the present sense of the word, were little known. The sword was not only the *ultima*, but the *prima ratio regum*; and the success of battles depended more on individual strength and skill, than on scientific arrangement and combined movements.

reason

reason why it is so little known, as upon that very account it is the more generally interesting and instructive. A mere series of political events, seems a kind of automaton, and few eyes are perspicacious enough to discern the springs by which it is moved, and few understandings sufficiently extensive to comprehend how far individuals are concerned in what affects the whole. But personal adventures and catastrophes are all life and action; every reader is concerned in them, as every reader has either felt the passions and principles from whence they are produced in his own breast, or has been affected by their operations on others.

I am heartily sorry for the vexatious operation which you are obliged to undergo. It is, indeed, very grievous to be confined in London, and to be obliged to quarrel with the sun, with whom one is upon such friendly terms. The weather is extremely fine here, and I make as much use of it as my head will allow me. I took a walk the other morning, which I believe you would have admitted to be in the true sublime. I rambled till I got to the top of a hill, from whence I surveyed a vast extent of variegated country all round me, and the immense ocean beneath. I enjoyed this magnificent spectacle in all the freedom of absolute solitude. Not a house, or a human creature was within my view, nor a sound to be heard but the voice of the elements, the whist-

whistling winds, and rolling tide. I found myself deeply awed, and struck by this situation. The first impression it gave me, was a sense of my own littleness, and I seemed shrinking to nothing in the midst of the stupendous objects by which I was surrounded. But I soon grew more important by the recollection that nothing which my eyes could survey, was of equal dignity with the human mind, at once the theatre and spectator of the wonders of Omnipotence. How vast are the capacities of the soul *, and how little and contemptible its aims and pursuits? I continued my speculations on this elevation, till my thoughts grew overpowered and fatigued, and I was very well contented to descend to humbler exercises and employments. The view of great and astonishing objects is sometimes very useful, and gives a noble extension to the powers of the mind; but for wise ends, it is not formed to dwell long upon them, without a weariness that brings it back to its duties in the ordinary affairs of the world, and to common business and amusement.

* If such be the case, how strong and conclusive is the argument deduced from it, that the soul must be destined to another state more suitable to its views and powers. It is much to be lamented, that Mrs. Carter did not pursue this train of thought further.

"Oh had *she* pressed *her* theme, pursu'd the track
Which opens out of darkness into day!
How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me!"

And

And so after all the elevation of the thoughts from a view of the sublime and stupendous objects of nature, one is very glad to return to enjoyments of a gentler kind, the song of linnets, and the bloom of roses.

Mrs. Chapone is at Kensington with Mr. and Mrs. Mulso, and if you stay in town long enough to call on her there, it will make them all very happy; I had a letter from her lately, in which, on behalf of herself and Miss Burrows, she most strictly enjoins me to take care of them for next winter. *Nimirum intelligit—quanti me facias, &c.*

It is from no manner of cruelty to myself that I shall not be so happy to wait on you to Sandleford, but that it really is not in my power. I hope I shall soon hear that you are escaped thither from the fiery air of London. Do not forget that you have promised to send me my Lord Lyttelton's vision *.

We are just settled in our new abode, and now it is doubtful whether we may not very soon be obliged to quit it, which you will think no

* The Editor has inserted a copy of this poem, which he found in manuscript among Mrs. Carter's papers, at the close of the first volume (quarto edition) of the Letters between Mrs. Carter and Miss Talbot, in one of which an enquiry had been made concerning it.

very

very amusing prospect to people who have but just recovered the fatigue and inconvenience of one removal. I think on this and some other perplexities as little as I can, but they will sometimes harass my spirits. I was obliged to you for mentioning that our friends at Lambeth are well, for Miss Talbot has not writ to me time immemorial. I hope your eyes continue well.

Your's, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

Deal, *September* 1, 1762.

Good morning to you, my dear Mrs. Montagu, and to the sun, which is just risen from the ocean, and illuminates my window with his first rays. Being awaked particularly early this morning, I have seen all the stars gradually vanish from the sky, and have enjoyed the whole progress of the advancing day. I am so enlivened by the cool breezes of this early hour, that I should be tempted to plan the execution of prodigious schemes before night, if a long experience had not taught me that the spirits which so gaily salute the rising sun, before half his race is ended may sink into languor and inactivity. But the time

time will come when their powers shall be equal to the business of an eternal day! In the mean while, if we are wise enough to apply them properly, they are sufficient to every purpose of mortal being: and where they disappoint the vivid hopes of active exertion, they are however equal to the duty of cheerful submission to the humiliations of imperfect life. But what signifies my preaching when you are fast asleep?

I rejoice in the account you give me of our noble friend. I am glad you have authorized me to contradict the report about his being the author of that party paper *, for whatever my own convictions might be, you are sensible that mere convictions were not a sufficient answer to a downright assertion. I find your admirer, for which reason I am his, the Duc de Nivernois is coming into England.

I was glad to find you so strongly object to the embassy to Russia, at which I was extremely scandalized. Possibly by this time the embassador may have a new sovereign to address, if the account of fresh commotions are true. Surely it seems right that all the princes in Christendom

* Alluding to a party publication mentioned in a preceding letter, supposed to be conducted, or written, by Lord Bath.

should

should make a point of discouraging such usurpation as this, not only as they are kings, but as they are men. One is excessively shocked at such high acts of wickedness in conspicuous characters; yet alas! how many passions are there uncorrected and unnoticed in private life, which would produce just the same effects, if they were exerted on the same objects. The same ambitious, turbulent spirit, which unchecked by restraints of duty, harasses the peace, and disturbs the order of a single family, would, from the same motives, overturn a kingdom, if a kingdom was within its sphere of action.

I hope you had a pleasant tour to Winchester and Southampton. How vexatious it is, that you will go for a view of the sea, every where but to Deal, where you might have it in such perfection. I condole with you on parting with Mrs. Scott. Pray did Mr. Ramsay finish your picture before you left London, and is my Lord Bath satisfied with the likeness.

I am ever, &c.

LETTER XLV.

Deal, *October* 20, 1762.

I HEARTILY congratulate you, my dear friend, on the pleasure of my Lord Bath's visit to Sandleford. I could not content myself with troubling you to convey my acknowledgements to him, without writing a line or two to himself, which I take the liberty of enclosing.

My letter, which met your's upon the road, has, by this time, probably informed you, that Plato was perfectly innocent of my silence, and that it was not a philosophical, but an aching head, that prevented my writing sooner. According to your orders, I applied a blister, and design to give it fair trial, though I do not flatter myself with the least benefit from it; but I will release you from the history of my dull head, and leave you to the delectable tragi-comic adventures of the unaccountable heart of the *unpossuble* Doctor*, in this year of his passion for Miss Burrows; his letter was indeed a most extraordinary trait of his original character. I am very glad that an information from a better authority, pre-

* Probably Dr. Mouncey.

vented

vented your being alarmed by his intelligence. All that can be said in excuse for such a letter is, that the *unpossuble* Doctor treats his friends exactly as he would treat himself,—that he would certainly pun and quote, and witticize, upon any misfortune of his own, just as he did, when he supposed he was lamenting my Lord Bath. The Doctor's wit, I believe, was never excited by malice or vanity, but is mere constitutional infirmity, and as perfectly involuntary as St. Vitus's dance.

I am pursuing Vertôt's History * with great entertainment. The defence of Rhodes is, indeed, a prodigy of valour, and in a justifiable cause. This, I fear, cannot be affirmed of some the expeditions of these adventurous heroes. Their care of the sick and wounded is very edifying and affecting.

I am heartily grieved for my Lord Lyttelton's accident, and particularly as I have felt that a strained ancle is a most teazing and dispiriting confinement †. Yet it is a mercy that such a fall had

* Of the Chevaliers de Malthe. Ha! he lived a few years longer, he might have had the satisfaction, or the sorrow, of bringing it to a conclusion.

† It is not always felt so, especially by literary persons. The Editor knew a clergyman, who had the misfortune to break

had not worse consequences. I am sufficiently vain of my Lord Lyttelton's approbation of the Introduction to Epictetus; and I am more vain of the honor of being ranked amongst his friends. I extremely enjoy what his Lordship says about the Ode*, which indeed, I think, is a master-piece.

I rejoice to hear you are so well, as I feared this wet weather must have rendered Sandleford very damp and rheumatic; I shall be glad to hear you think of London. I can say but little for my head or my health; I have suffered greatly; but, thank God, am better, and when I can get into the air, I hope to mend daily. I am, in all healths, and all weathers, my dear friend,

Your's, &c.

break his leg, and was confined for a whole winter to his sopha; and he used to say it was the happiest winter he had ever passed.

* The Ode by Mrs. Chapone, prefixed to Mrs. Carter's translation of Epictetus.

LETTER XLVI.

November 23, 1762.

I was beginning to grow uneasy at not hearing from you, my dear friend, till your letter gave me the pleasure of knowing that nothing worse than the bustle of a London life, had prevented your writing before. My impatience to know the state of your health, would soon have got the better of my indolence, if you had longer delayed to give me an account of it; but no motive less strong would have been sufficient to combat that aversion to a pen, which the teazing pain in my head, renders almost insuperable. In other respects, I am, I thank God, very greatly mended, and, for this last week or ten days, I have found a very sensible increase of strength, so I believe the fever to be quite removed. By dint of much industry and perseverance, I still continue the blister; and, had you been very fond of the amusement, you might have done the same by your's; a few more flies, would soon have conquered the refractoriness, and made it become more tractable; I propose to make mine up twelve or thirteen weeks, which, considering the

the little good it has done me, and the state of my poor head, I hope you will allow to be a very meritorious resolution, and sufficient to remove all your objections about not giving it fair play last year.

The more you see of Mrs. Chapone, I am persuaded you will become the more sensible of the greatness of her understanding, and of the goodness of her heart. She expresses great happiness in the regard with which you have honored her, and that subject makes good part of a letter which I received from her not long ago.

I am obliged to you for your political intelligence; for I had some curiosity indeed to hear what was going on in the great and busy world, from an information on which I could depend. I am heartily sorry to find, on whatever it is grounded, that there is such an unhappy discontent among us; but however unreasonable it may be, or in whatever improper instances, it may discover itself, the general character of mankind, it is to be hoped, ought not to be estimated by the behaviour of that part of it, which interest or ambition, engages in the intricacies of political cabals. While you were writing your last letter, probably human wickedness, like many other objects, was magnified to your imagination, by appearing through the fog; and the next bright sunshine will, I hope, reduce it to a less formidable

midable size. At all events, I think we should not be likely to gain much in this respect, by retiring to the vales of *Italy;* and so, if you please, we will try what is to be done by sitting in your dressing-room, and talking over some of our friends in England, who are most likely to reconcile us *au genre humain.* I very impatiently long to be as happy as you kindly wish me, when you wish me to be there. Nine hundred copies of the Poems have been sold since I left town.

The respectful compliments of all my family attend you, with many thanks for your kind enquiries. Mrs. Pennington has better health, than for many years. She is very soon to lie in, so I hope it will please God, I shall leave her safely in her chamber, and come to you without solicitude. I give you joy of your new nephew.

I rejoice to hear that your health is not affected by this weather. We have had the most dead calm here, that I think I ever remember so long together. The sea has neither sound nor motion. It had a most violent degree of both, during some weeks before, in which more mischief was done in the Downs than I ever recollect at once. The situation of my room*, to which I was then pretty much confined, gave me an opportunity of seeing

* Her study before-mentioned.

too

too much of the distress of the ships. Indeed, as fond as I am of the sea, this house is too much like the Eddystone; and far as one may look forward, to such a distance as another winter, I please myself on many accounts with the thoughts of not being likely to spend it here; for I have felt more than I foresaw the inconvenience of being so *isolée*.—Adieu.

LETTER XLVII.

Deal, *December* 23, 1762.

I AM much obliged to you, my dear friend, for notifying my arrival to good Mrs. Norman; I have always found her so honest and so open-hearted a woman, that I am quite flattered by the account you give me of the pleasure she exprest at my coming. If all people had the simplicity and uprightness of this valuable woman, I should not at present be harassed and perplexed by the tricking disposition of some, who instead of hopping through the dirt, with a stick, like good Mrs. Norman, ride up and down the world in a warm chariot. You cannot think, and I shall not trouble you, with an account how

vilely I am treated about my purchase. At all events, I believe I shall infallibly be cheated, if not after all tricked out of the bargain. However a few days must now decide it.

My head is and has been dreadfully bad, and probably the worse for the anxiety I suffered about dear Mrs. Pennington, who, after a long and severe suffering, is, I thank God, safe in bed, since the 21st, with a fine boy. I am too helpless and cowardly ever to be present on such occasions; but my sister went, and was overturned in a post-chaise, but providentially got scarcely any hurt. I must say adieu, go to my pillow, and endeavour to dream of you, for I can write no more.

LETTER LXVIII.

Deal, *December 29*, 1762.

I AM extremely obliged to you, my dear friend, for the honor you design Mr. and Mrs. Pennington*, which I am sure will do their hearts

* Of being God-mother to the Editor of these Letters; to which Mrs. Montagu added the honor of her name. The Editor

hearts good. I shall see Mr. Pennington to-day, and will acquaint him with the favor you are so good as to intend them. Is there any particular name, which you would chuse for my little fat nephew? St. Leger was greatly afraid that the poor thing must have been sacrificed to the safety of his mother; but, God be thanked, this sad extremity was avoided, and a very fine boy saved *. Mrs Pennington has been very ill ever since, but no danger apprehended; but, poor soul, she has had a worse trial than with any of her children.

The last account I had from my lawyer, gave me hopes that I should at last get my purchase; but the people with whom I am concerned are so uncertain, that I can have no security but their

Editor was also indebted to her for much personal kindness, and the most obliging attention to the close of her life; and for the advantage of a residence in and near Paris, for four months, with her and her nephew and heir, Mr. Montagu, in 1776.

* "The little fat nephew" was saved, among other good purposes as he humbly trusts, to write the Memoirs of his Aunt's Life, and to publish these and her other Letters; all tending, he hopes and believes, to the edification as well as to the innocent amusement, of the world. In all that he has written and published, upon this and other subjects, these purposes have always been kept in view; and therefore he ventures to trust, in all Christian humility of heart, that whatever he has written, or may write, will never be a subject of regret to him on his death-bed.

hands

hands and seals. If a regard to equity and their word was sufficiently binding, the bargain was long since made. In any other view, but the security of a house to live in, the purchase, I believe, would be sufficiently dear; but after so much harassing and vexation, as I have felt for some time, from the uncertainty of any place to fix in, I should sensibly feel the disappointment of my hopes of being settled in one that did not depend upon the will of a landlord. Indeed the particular degree of ill health which I have experienced this winter, has rendered repose more than ever a favorite object to my mind. You may probably awaken it, if I grow tolerably well, to more lively ideas. Yet at all events, there is something very soothing and comfortable in the possibility of a quiet retreat.

If I have the pleasure of hearing from you again, before I see you, be so good as to direct your letters still here. I propose indeed, if my affairs are finished, to go to Canterbury on Thursday; but I may be prevented. If I do go, I shall stay with Miss Blomer, till I set out for London, and my sister will send your letter to me. —Adieu.

LETTER XLIX.

Deal, *April* 23, 1763.

As I received your note at Lambeth, my dear friend, just as dinner was ready, it was impossible for me to thank you for it, or to answer your very *natural* question, whether I missed you or not; I felt the less regret however, as I think you are furnished with sufficient materials to answer yourself.

I left Lambeth on Thursday morning, and have ever since been *straggling with Phil. Doe and Mic. Roe*, up and down the county of Kent. I got to Canterbury by four o'clock; and there, from a dirty crowded vehicle, I emerged into the fresh air, and walked to Wingham, where I remained that night. Yesterday morning, I sat out on the prosecution of my rambles, and arrived safely at Deal about six; where, I thank God, I had the happiness to find all my friends tolerably well. I do not find myself at all the worse for my walk this morning: I slept very sound, and waked with a more moderate proportion of headach than usual. It was so fine a south-west wind yesterday, that I pleased myself, as I was travelling

velling through all its fragrance, with the thought that you were enjoying it at Ealing; but a sullen north-east has, this morning, brought back all the gloom and the severity of winter. My wishes have changed with the wind, and I now hope you are by your fire-side in London, sometimes asking yourself whether you miss me.

I believe you will soon receive a note and a visit from Lady Harriet Roper, to whom I had an opportunity of mentioning the person who was recommended to Mr. Ramsay by Lady Stanhope. I do not sufficiently recollect what was in that letter to know whether the establishment which Lady Harriet has to propose is such as might be wished for her, but I thought it could not be wrong to name her, and when her Ladyship and you talk it over, you will judge how far it may be proper.

I hope my Lord Bath has not suffered in his health from the melancholy scene which has been passing this last week. I beg my best respects to his Lordship.

I have felt very fretful and disappointed at receiving no letter from you since I came home. Not that there was any manner of reason why I should think you would write; but reason belongs only to the head, and expectation is the partage of the heart. I hope you will soon give

me an account of your health, and of all your schemes and engagements, for I see no reason why so trifling a circumstance as the distance of seventy or eighty miles should exclude me from your parties. I enclose you the strawberry receipt for my Lord Bath, which remained quietly in my pocket when I saw you last. Be so good to make my most affectionate compliments to Mrs. Vesey, and tell her——No; as soon as ever I get a little disengaged from my present hurry on first coming home, I will tell her myself. Remember you are to go to Lambeth. Adieu, my dear friend, I have, every year, a thousand thanks to return you, for having contributed, in a thousand instances, to make me happy, and I am, with the truest gratitude and affection,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER L.

Deal, *April* 30, 1763.

You were very good, my dear friend, in giving me the pleasure of hearing from you so soon. I rejoice, in the first place, in the intelligence that you are tolerably well; and, in the next;

next, that you despair of finding any thing like me. You have my free consent to find people that are wiser and better, and finer and more witty and entertaining, for all this will do me no hurt: I shall keep my own place in your system, provided you find nothing exactly like me.

How I wished you could have fetched me to make tea for that noble variegated party of heterogeneous characters, of which you sat in such dolorous expectation. All parties would have been the better by this, you would have been spared the fatigue, which you hate, of making tea; the good company would have had such as they could swallow by my means; and they, in return, would have afforded a fine subject of speculation for me; who, of all the quiet-looking, silent people that ever existed, have the most amusement in a mixed multitude: and yet what a miserable wight should I be, if there was nothing more to be derived from human conversation than this mere exercise of head!

I heartily condole with you, and with her, that our charming friend, Mrs. Vesey, is so soon to leave England; I shall feel her loss more strongly on my own account, if I live to come to London, next winter. She seems still to have very melancholy apprehensions about her eyes; pray tell

me

me if you have lately heard what account Mr. Gataker gives of them.

I rejoice to hear so good an account of the health of our noble friend, and what is of more important consequence, of the disposition of his mind. God grant him still some years of improving virtue, and may your friendship assist and encourage him in the best preparation for that awful period which at last must come.

With all my hurry and impatience to get at least my own apartment fitted up before you summon me into foreign parts, I have hitherto been able to do nothing but worry and teaze every body that stands in my way. Indeed I have done my own share by giving all my directions, but the execution depends upon others. Some of my friends, I believe, think I am going to ruin myself with all convenient speed; but I hope I am rather more cautious than they suppose, and suffer my genius for alterations and improvements to be crampt by two lines in our friend Dr. Young, and I do not chuse to

Prepare a home from which to run away.

My garden is absolutely *en friche*, but I hope before the end of the summer to see it blooming (or that somebody else will see it) with roses and jessamines; and I have very magnificently ordered

dered a wall to be built for their security, which will cost more than if I was to contract for all the roses and jessamines in the county of Kent by the year. But then I have a cherry-tree with half a dozen blossoms, and an apricot that never bears, and all this in a piece of ground at least as wide, and I think rather longer than your dressing-room, but of this last circumstance I will not be too positive.

Have you seen Madame B——. I do not know how to spell her name. The motive of her coming to England gives me great curiosity about her. If her morals and character are not too French, I hope you will be acquainted with her, and rescue the honour of our nation from the idea she may form of us from a too general view.

Adieu, my dear friend. I have another letter to write, and then must return to my pillow, to which my head has confined me to-day; but I have been drinking my tea, and am the better for it, and hope to be very creditable to-morrow.

Ever most affectionately, &c.

LETTER LI.

Deal, *May* 9, 1763.

And so, my dear friend, you think it very reasonable and proper that I should be as talkative as Socrates! What, because he went flirting about to every public place at Athens, in order to convince the fine gentlemen and fine ladies, and wits and free-thinkers, that they knew absolutely nothing, would you have me set about proving the same truth (which to be sure without one's being half so wise as Socrates might easily enough be proved) to all the fine gentlemen and fine ladies, and wits and free-thinkers, in every visiting-room and fandango in the metropolis of Great Britain! But will you secure me against the consequences of so laudable an undertaking? For I do not much like the thought of the figure I should make, if Poet —— should draw me up in a basket holding dialogues with the clouds, between the boxes and gallery of Covent-garden or Drury-lane; nor do I much chuse that any lord's steward or any lady's housekeeper should charge an article in their bill with hemlock for Mrs. Carter. Unless you can assure me against hazards

hazards like these, it will be more prudent for me, instead of following your advice, to preserve my silence and my safety, with regard to the generality of the world, and content myself as usual with talking you and a few more of my particular friends to death, without the least hazard to my own person.

I grieve to find that the want of health incapacitates you for a complete enjoyment of a society, in which one would wish to be perfectly alive. I know not whether the illness is most trying which deadens the sensibility of pleasure, or that which is aggravated by disagreeable business and fatigue, which is my case at present between a feverish head-ach and the overlooking my workmen. But how little do either you or I suffer, and how little reason have we to complain, when we compare our inconveniences with the terrible calamities, which, God be thanked, neither of us have ever felt *! What a dreadful story

* This is true, because Christian, philosophy. Whoever duly considers how little he deserves the blessings which he enjoys, may well compare his situation rather with those who have fewer of the good things of life than he has himself, and are less exempted from its calamities, than with those who seem to have a larger measure of God's bounty than he has; and he will find abundant reasons for thankfulness, none for discontent.

indeed

indeed is the fire in Brook-street! I apprehended it very bad from the way in which you mentioned it in your letter, but found the particulars in the newspaper still more shocking than I had imagined. I hope neither you, nor any of your friends, are any otherwise concerned in this terrible disaster, than for the general feelings of humanity.

I hope nothing will happen to check Mr. Montagu's alacrity of preparation for the voyage to Spa. I imagine the time remains fixed as it did, at least that your setting out will not be earlier than you proposed. I will get all my affairs in as great forwardness as possible before I leave them, but they do not proceed so fast as my impatience is apt to wish. A lamentable discovery of some defect in the floor and joists, sets me grievously back in fitting up my room.

Mrs. Underwood is exceedingly diverted at my being so notable, and desires me to tell you, with her love, that I have more in me than you are aware of.

Has Mrs. Vesey with all her heart renounced and forgot me? To be sure she has, or she would have sent me some signification to the contrary when you wrote your letter with her at your elbow. Adieu, my dear friend, I must go see after my workmen, complete the aching of

my

my head, and then lay it upon a pillow, and desire it to dream of you.

Most affectionately, &c.

LETTER LII.

Deal, *May 26, 1763.*

Though I should have been much better pleased, my dear friend, to have waited on you from Deal, I will be ready to attend you at Dover on the third of June. If you can guess either to what inn you shall go, or about what time of the day you shall be there, I shall be obliged to you if you will be so good to let me know, that I may accommodate my hour of setting out from hence accordingly. As I must come in a post-chaise, I believe I shall bring my sister Mary to pay her respects to you. My other friends are *disappointed* that you cannot come here, I am only *sorry*. I write in a great hurry, as I am in the midst of embarrassments and business of various kinds.

I am much obliged to you and my Lord Bath for your scheme, but I do not in the least covet your embroidered bed, but content myself with wishing

wishing you may sleep as soundly in it as I thank God I usually do under a tester of blue stuff. As to the other amusements with which you propose to furnish me, I have business enough, and playthings enough, to keep me in sufficient employment and tolerable good humour without them.

That so large a company should all be setting out for different kingdoms in so short a time, was indeed a singular circumstance, and I dare say must give you some striking reflections. God grant that all who were not returning to their own country, may happily meet again in this, after their several dispersions. Mrs. Vesey, I imagine, is by this time set out. Be so good as to mention when you write whether she is or not, for she desired me to write to her to Dublin, and I am not willing to send a letter till I know whether she is likely to receive it there.

I shall hope to hear from you again before we meet at Dover. I am, my dear friend,

Most affectionately, &c.

P. S. Be so good, if you can tell, to let me know in what manner I must tell my friends to direct for me at Spa. Since I wrote this, I received the favour of your letter, and hope to be ready for you at Dover by one o'clock on the 3d.

If any thing should make any alteration in your scheme, I shall hope to hear from you on Sunday night next; if not, I will take care to secure a post-chaise in time. I think my Lord Bath's scheme of embarking as soon as possible is a very good one. It is to be hoped this long east wind will be changed before then, or I believe it will not be possible for the vessels to sail. Adieu *.

LETTER LIII.

Deal, *September* 21, 1763.

I REJOICE in this fine day, my dear friend, which will brighten all your prospects on the road; and I am too good a patriot not to wish that the views of the Medway and Thames, compared with the banks of the Rhine, may furnish you with many an observation in favour of England. I did not

* This was the last Letter written to Mrs. Montagu, before the tour alluded to with her and Lord Bath to Spa, and some parts of Germany and Flanders. Mrs. Carter's Letters to some of her correspondents, while on this journey, are given in the Memoirs of her Life, beginning at p. 170, of the first edition; 251, of the second and third.

half

half enjoy my walk up Dover-hill yesterday, because you were not there to share it with me; and I extremely regretted your not having seen the castle, which is a more striking object of rude greatness than any that we have met in our travels, and perfectly well adapted to the wild irregular situation in which it is placed. As I saw and thought for you as well as myself, (how seldom is it that I see or think without you!) I was pleased with considering how you would have been charmed by an immediate transition from this savage landscape, into a country smiling in all the ornaments of cultivation, and interspersed with villages and farms enough to preserve it from that solitary air, which deadened some of the finest landscapes in Flanders. The same circumstances strangely vary their effect in different situations, and that absolute solitude which we used to enjoy to so high a degree in the environs of Spa, always appears flat and disagreeable in a land of culture. My postillion drove very well, and conducted me safely in about an hour and a half to Deal, where, I thank God, I had the happiness of finding my father, and the rest of my family and friends, very well; and our little tenement perfectly clean, and light, and *riant*, which, after the dirt and darkness which we have so long endured in our *gîte* upon the

road, was a very delightful circumstance. I long for you to feel the comfort of your rooms in Hill-street, and I shall grieve to pursue you any farther*.

My head is tolerably well to-day, and I have so much conquered the motion of the ship, that I can look upon the sea from my window, without any uncharitable resentment.

Mrs. Underdown bids me tell you with her compliments, that my having her tongue to encounter, has prevented my going on with my letter. She has, however, left me time enough to return you my sincerest thanks for every improvement and every pleasure which I have acquired in our late tour. If my poor shattered languid health had interrupted my enjoyment of the advantages which you so kindly intended me much more than it really did, I should be very far from having any reason to regret that I had accompanied you. As the highest value I set on every opportunity that I either could or could not improve, is from considering it as a proof of your affection. It grieves me indeed to reflect how much trouble and uneasiness I must have

* That is, into the north, where Mr. Montagu had a house near his collieries, which seems to have been a residence more profitable than agreeable.

given

given you, and how very little capable I was of being of the least use or amusement to you. My father's respectful compliments attend you. He is much pleased with the honor you have done him in the quadrille box, which has luckily escaped better than many of the other contents of my trunk, which as poor John with so lamentable a face often foretold are grievously *delabrès*. The fine gown, however, has received no hurt, and I have been rejoicing the eyes of Mrs. U. with a sight of it, as she has a wonderful delight in seeing me attired more like a fine lady than a stoic. I shall be sadly disappointed if I do not hear how you all got to London by Friday's post. Be so good to make my best compliments to my Lord Bath and Mr. Montagu, and assure them of my grateful sense of their favors to me. Adieu, my dear friend, you give me continual subjects for new acknowledgments, but I cannot be more tenderly and sincerely than I am,

Your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER LIV.

Deal, *September* 29, 1763.

I AM extremely obliged to you, my dear friend, for making me happy by so good an account of your health, for I was in pain to know whether you had got over the fatigue of your journey on Wednesday. I am heartily glad to find your journey to the north is absolutely fixed, but it is upon the same principle as when I have a tooth to be drawn, I am always extremely impatient to set about it. This will be a long operation; but till it is begun I cannot hope for its being ended. To be sure, while I remain at Deal, I see as little *of* you while you are surrounded by your Chinese Mandarins in London, as I do when you are among your geese at Newcastle; and I think as much *on* you in one situation as in the other, and yet I cannot help feeling a strange difference, from your being so much farther out of my reach.

I am sorry to hear that poor Israel and John are so ill, but I hope they are not in danger. I did not know Sir W. Knatchbull*, but I most

* Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, Bart. of Mersham-hatch in Kent, who died in this year.

sincerely

sincerely grieve for his sister. She has great sensibility, and will be very deeply struck by this blow. Your mentioning three fevers in your letter makes me apprehensive that London is sickly, as I have had another account of the same kind. I earnestly intreat you to fatigue yourself as little as possible with the preparations for your journey, and rather leave your wardrobe unpacked than put yourself out of a capacity of making use of it. That our preferment may proceed by equal steps, I promise you, in the mean time, to avoid all intemperance in Hebrew and Greek. Indeed, the hopes of the professorship will not prove any dangerous temptation to a breach of my promise; for as I never heard that any professor or professoress had any claim to the ornament of a blue ribbon, mere musty manuscripts, *sine* blue ribbon, have no attractions for me.

But you bid me tell you something about my health. The disorder of my nerves is, I thank God, greatly abated. I have some few remains of hesitation, but, by some care, I can avoid its being perceived. I have had too or three bad head-achs, but, in general, I believe I am rather better in that respect too. I know not how well I might be able to bear the least degree of hurry, but of that at present I have no trial, as I am in

a state

a state of profound repose. The absence of my sister confines me more than usual, so that I have been scarcely anywhere but to Mrs. Underdown's, except two or three walks to Mongeham. My family and friends are, I thank God, well enough to prevent my feeling any particular anxiety about them, so that my heart is at ease; and I hope by some care and moderate exercise, I shall present myself to you in January, not quite such a miserable drooping object as that which has perplexed and saddened you for so many weeks. I have unpacked all my bundles and deposited their contents in their proper places; have paid my workmens' bills, and am going to prepare for renewing, and when all this is over shall set down to enjoy the *noncuranza* of an empty purse. My father, to my great joy, seems perfectly well satisfied with our habitation. The rooms are to be sure much smaller than I could wish; but then the house is in such a situation, that even my intemperate love of air has enough to content it. Adieu.

LETTER LV.

Deal, *October* 5, 1763.

In whatever state I am, every instance of tenderness from you, my dear friend, is always sure to do me good, and I very sensibly felt the kind concern you exprest about me in your last letter. I thank God I still continue in as good a state as when I writ to you before. This blustering and very severe wind, I fear has not been very beneficial to your cold; but I hope it will have left you before you set out on your hyperborean expedition. If you were going into the cheering warmth of Italian suns, and the perfume of orange groves, I could quietly leave you to your own devices; but when you are travelling into a frozen climate, and a desolate country, I form a hundred wishes to accompany you. But here I remain, and you set out on Friday!

"Alpinas, ah dura, nives, et frigora *Trentæ*,
Me sine, sola vides.—Ah te ne frigora cædant!"

I am glad you were pleased with your visit to the drawing room. I cannot find out whom you mean by Sir Billy Briton. I heartily grieve for the

the perplexed state of public affairs; but what except perplexity could be expected from such measures as have been unhappily pursued. How thankful ought they to be whom the obscurity of private life shelters from the turbulence of ambition, and preserves from the temptations of power!

I hope it is not merely the ill success of political dabbling, nor the disappointment of private revenge, that occasion the bad looks of Mrs. P—. But I cannot help thinking she is a good deal affected by the present situation of a person to whom she has been so much obliged, and for whom, I believe, she feels a very real gratitude; and whether she thinks his conduct right or wrong, the consequences of it must be very mortifying to her.

Pray did you ever try any preparation of *lapis callminaris* for your eyes! Mrs. Underdown has used it with success, and has been told such wonderful effects of it from a long experience, by the person from whom she had the receipt, that I could not help mentioning it to you. It has lately been published in the newspapers. If I could meet with any of the Scott family, I would name it for poor Mrs. Saumaise; for it is said to have recovered people nearly blind.

I hope

I hope Lady W. and Lady P. were landed before all this stormy weather, or poor souls how sick at least they must have been. I did not think Mrs. Middleton would have returned so soon. Have you paid her the half guinea which lay so heavily on your conscience, and of which you bid me remind you! and you are hereby reminded accordingly. I will make your compliments to Madame de Blum * when I write. I have not heard from her since she left Spa.

I dare not be so unreasonable as to desire to hear from you before you set out; but I hope you will give me some account how you bear your journey, before you get to the end of it, and whether you are quite free from your cold. Adieu, my dearest friend, every happiness attend you.

Yours, &c.

* A German Lady whom they met at Spa, and with whom they formed an intimacy which continued as long as she lived; though supported chiefly, or perhaps wholly, by epistolary correspondence.

LETTER LVI.

Deal, *October* 21, 1763.

The post on the northern road is as slow in its motions as your coach and six, for your letter, my dear friend, did not reach me till Tuesday night, whatever *ennui* you might find in your journey to Newcastle, I think you would experience very little on the road to Jerusalem. As this is an expedition which I can undertake without any fatigue, either to you or myself, I will follow you thither very soon, as I shall have a peculiar kind of pleasure, in travelling over the same country where you have so lately past.

I rejoiced for you in the fine view at Weatherby, and for myself in the striking picture which you were so good to give me of it, which has left me very little to wish for from a sight of the original.

I am very happy in the account of your being in perfect health, may you bring the same blessing back to town unimpaired by the northern gales, and, in that case, I shall not be immoderately troubled for you at this temporary banishment. I hope you will never be experimentally convinced

convinced what the difference may be, between being scalped or flayed, and taking a dull journey, but as far as I can judge by mere speculation, it appears to me rather more than you seem to apprehend.

I have not much to say to the advantage of my perverse head, and I have often a little sly fever that renders it still more perverse. However, as I thank God, all my friends are well, I am very tranquil and cheerful, and find my shattered system extremely repaired upon the whole by that profound repose in which I lull and sooth my indolence at present, for I very seldom go out. I shall not be suffered to indulge this absolute quiet when my sister comes home, as my friends will then make demands upon me which they now forbear; and I believe it will be better for me not to be allowed to continue very long in such a state of retirement, as for a little while does me good. I should be glad to make my advantage of this fine weather, and ramble about the fields more than I do; but between the languor that succeeds one fit of the head-ach, and the return of another, I do not find many opportunities of exercise, but am much more disposed to lounge over a book. I contrived, however, the other day to visit for the first time since her death, the now deserted spot where I used to pass so many

many agreeable hours of easy cheerful society with my poor friend Mrs. Gambier *. I indulged a melancholy propensity to walk over the garden in which I had so often accompanied her, and amidst the variety of thoughts with which this circumstance filled my mind, I could not help feeling a tender concern at seeing a place in which she took so much delight, neglected and in ruins, and the myrtles and roses, which were still in bloom, almost covered with weeds. A moment's recollection could tell me, all this was nothing to her; but I know not how it is, instead of accompanying our departed friends in their happier state, our minds are perpetually endeavouring to keep up their connection with our own, and in great kindness we invite them back from the unfading blooms of paradise, to a participation of mortal roses with all their thorns. But so it must be, while on the objects of a future world we only reason, and in whatever relates to the present, we feel; and the immediate and natural force of sentiment will always be superior

* Wife of Admiral James Gambier, who was uncle to the present Lord Gambier. Admiral Gambier had been living at Ripple-House, about three miles from Deal, of which place Mrs. Carter is here speaking. How delightful, as well as just and pious, are the reflections which this melancholy visit occasioned!

to

to that of conviction, in every instance wherein a principle of duty, and a superior assistance, do not supply it with adventitious powers.

I know not what other virtues a hermitage may be capable of producing, but I am not absolutely of your mind that it is a soil for charity. The faults (for faults there will be in every state) which arise in solitude, are of a restrained and solitary kind, and not likely to give us the fellow feeling which we should naturally experience in society for those which resemble our own *.

I am glad to hear my Lord Bath continues so well, and beg my respectful compliments to him when you write. I hope he will not be so undutifully lazy as you apprehend in your absence. It is a strange thing, that if people cannot travel over sea and land by the hundred miles, they will determine to sit absolutely still.

I hope Mr. Montagu retains the benefit which he received from his travels; my compliments wait on him. I imagine by this time you are got into the track of business, and shall be

* It might also be added, that they are not very likely to be cured; because as they cannot be caused by sudden temptation, or by that elevation of spirits which society frequently occasions, they must arise either from deep-rooted depravity, or from the want of a due sense of feeling with respect to their own errors.

heartily glad to hear you are getting through it as fast as possible. I cannot, however, allow you to be so busy as not sometimes to find a quarter of an hour to give me the happiness of knowing you are well. I am, my dear friend,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER LVII.

Deal, *December* 24, 1763.

By this time, my dear friend, I hope I may congratulate you and myself on your being safely arrived at the end of your uncomfortable long journey. I had the favor of your letter from Ferry-bridge, but not till five days after the date. I should sooner have thanked you for the last which you wrote from Newcastle, but as you then talked of beginning your journey by the time I received it, I knew not where a letter would be likely to find you.

Mr. and Mrs. Pennington desire their compliments and thanks for the trouble you were so good to take in prescribing a regimen for their son James, and they intend to pursue it when he gets well, of which there is at present, I thank God,

God, a prospect; but since I wrote to you last, the poor child has been so very bad, that there were but small hopes of his life. The danger of this poor little boy, and the distress of his parents, you will easily imagine have hurt my nerves, and in such a situation it is scarcely fair to judge of the success of Mrs. Boone's medicine. Yet I thought while I was taking it, that my head-aches were rather lessened; and I design to make another trial of it now my heart is more at ease.

The wind, of which one hears such terrible accounts from other places, was felt in a much less degree in this. All the mischief here was occasioned by the tide, which was indeed very outrageous, and I do not recollect ever observing the sea to look so full. Some ships were driven from their anchors by the violence of the tide, but I do not hear that any were lost. Many out-buildings next the sea were washed away; and if a second tide had come with equal violence *, it is probable that the houses must have been demolished, when they were thus strip' of their fences. It was greatly for my ease that I knew

* This has never been known to happen upon this coast. Whether this proceeds from a general law of nature, or from local peculiarity of situation, is not known; but the fact is certain; and were it otherwise, the town of Deal must have been long since swept away.

not of the height of the wind in other places, for my sister set out from London that very day, in the midst of falling tiles and chimnies; but I knew nothing of the hazard which she run, till I had the happiness, I thank God, of seeing her arrived in safety.

I had begun my letter with an intention of sending it by yesterday's post, but my head was so bad that it sent me to my pillow.

I am, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

Lambeth, *May* 9, 1764.

If you were at the distance of an hundred miles, it might, and must be endured; but to consider that we are within view of the same smoke, and within the sound of the same bells, and yet that I am in such a state of total ignorance about you, as if you were in the bottom of one of your mines, is insufferably vexatious. I long, my dear friend, to know how you do, what you do, and what you think of, and whether among other things you ever think of me. It is only among other things, that I can at present think

think of you, for from that impatience which always hurries me on, to be gone to whatever place I am destined soon to go, my thoughts are chiefly employed about my journey, and I put off every engagement with my absent friends, till I can enjoy it in full leisure, when I am quietly settled on the Kentish shore. I am to set out to-morrow morning, and hope to be at Deal on Saturday at furthest, and shall be greatly disappointed, if I do not receive some account of you soon after my arrival there.

I hope you have had no news from the north, worse than when I saw you, and that every post will bring such intelligence, as will allow you to think of your retreat to Sandleford; where I hope you will enjoy all the leisure and solitude, which are necessary to repair the devastations which hurry and crouds have made upon your health and spirits during the fatigues of the winter. For my own part, who from the advantages of insignificant unimportance, and the head-ach, have seldom so much of this world, as to grow heartily tired of it; instead of finding it necessary to repair the fatigues of the winter, by the solitude of the summer, I shall enliven and amuse the solitude of summer, by reflections and prospects of the society of the winter. I am certain it will be impossible for me ever to look backward

or forward, without meeting you in every point of view, and thinking with the tenderest gratitude on all the past happiness I have enjoyed in your friendship, and with the most pleasing hopes from the continuance of it.

I beg my respectful and affectionate compliments to my Lord Bath. Do pray write to me very soon. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER LIX.

Clarges-street, *May* 12, 1764.

I HOPE, my dearest friend, you are at least enjoying the quiet and repose of the country, though I fear without that sentiment of "vernal delight and joy," which gives it spirit. Indeed the rain which we have had, seems of so ungenial and cold a quality, that you might rather expect it to shower down snow-drops than roses. We spent the afternoon you went, according to our engagement, with Lord Lyttelton, who seized the opportunity of a north wind, to let down his curtains, and stir up his fire, beyond any mortal sufferance but his own. The Sylph *, however,

* Mrs. Vesey.

delighted

delighted herself in this snug warm appearance, which seemed to bring back the departed hours of January. But I who was so unlucky as to retain the idea of May, was suffocated without any abatement or alleviation whatever. Lord Lyttelton seemed well, and in good spirits; but I believe we all felt the society incomplete where you was absent. Yesterday I dined with Mrs. Vesey and Hancock at Mrs. Dunbar's. Mrs. Vesey lamented, with much pathetic eloquence, her misfortune in being obliged to go to the play. You will suspect that this lamentation did not raise much commiseration in the company. Yet I believe her regrets were extremely sincere, not indeed so much that she was to go to the play, as that she could not go to the play, and remain in South-street, at the same period of time, to both which inconsistent divertisements, she had a very unfeigned propensity. I finished my evening at Lady F. Coningsby's, who, you will be sorry to hear, has been very unwell, but was much better last night.

Dr. Addington* has ordered Master George Pitt to Malvern; but I fear with little prospect, that any remedy can restore him. My spirits sink whenever I think of the situation of our

* Father to Lord Sidmouth.

amiable

amiable friends under this trial. Mrs. Pitt was in town an hour or two, but I did not see her. Mrs. Dunbar seems to have lost all hope, and is so deeply, though very silently distressed, that it affects me inexpressibly whenever I see her. She goes to Lovet Farm to-day. The poor Pitts are to set out for Malvern on Monday. God grant them success from their journey, or support under the disappointment of it.

Miss Finch has read the Essay, and is highly pleased with it; she seems most particularly struck by the criticism on Macbeth. I write in expectation every minute of my father's coming to fetch me to dine in the city. Adieu, my dear friend. I hope nothing will prevent your returning early next week. I believe I shall depart the week after.

LETTER LX.

Deal, *May* 18, 1764.

I HOPE, my dear friend, to find your next letter, dated from Sandleford, because you wish to be there. But do pray beware of this treacherous sunshine which conceals the severity of

of the north-east wind, and may seduce you to stay too long in the open air, for this is sad rheumatic weather; I am seized by the neck and one arm; but while I can walk up and down the face of the earth, I hold a little partial crippling no great evil. I very sensibly feel the kindness of your wishing me with you at Sandleford, there I should most assuredly attend you very often, if certain mortal incumbrances did not prevent the possibility of my flying. But as I am alas no more than a two legged animal without wings, I must therefore content myself with thinking of you within the range, to which this awkward circumstance confines me. I am at least in the same climate with you, and consequently every ray of sunshine that enlivens my spirits, every blossom of the spring that cheers me with fragrance, and every nightingale that charms me with its song, is capable of giving me a double pleasure, by the reflection that you are enjoying it at the same time.

The history of the Black Prince* is indeed very extraordinary, and I shall be very glad to hear the sequel of it. I am sure you will be very happy if your recommendation of his cause to

* The Editor has no clue to the history of this interesting personage, and no recollection of having ever heard him mentioned.

Mr.

Mr. M. Robinson should prove a means of warming this poor man's winter, with comfortable food and cloathing. There are few objects of distress so affecting as those, who, in their very complexion, carry the stamp of banishment from their country, and seclusion from all the relations of social life. Yet our Oroonoko affords a comfortable proof, that however destitute of all other possessions, every mortal man may at all events be sure to find a wife.

We expect Mr. and Mrs. Douglas * home this week, when she goes to her own dwelling, and leaves to me the care of our *ménage*, for which I have no great inclination; however I must do as well as I can, and be as good an assistant to my father, as an aching head will let me; the knowing she is happy in having married the man of her choice, will do a great deal to reconcile me to this new employment.

In a letter which I lately received from Miss Talbot, she desired me to remind you of the Armenian letters, which she lent you some months ago, and which she wishes you would

* Mrs. Carter's youngest sister Mary, who married Mr. Douglas, afterwards a physician in London of some note. After her decease he married the widow of the Rev. Dr. Beauvoir (whose maiden name was Sharpe) who brought him a large fortune, and he then quitted practice.

send

send to her when you come to town. At your return to town, I imagine your schemes will be fixed for the summer, and I hope, in the mean time, you will have imbibed enough of the vital spirit of Sandleford air to repair the depredations which have been made upon your health by the fatigues of the winter. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER LXI.

Deal, *June* 1, 1764.

A FIT of indolence, my dear friend, has prevented my writing for some days, but an impatience to hear from you, at length gets the better of this powerful enchantment, and *coute qu'il coute* I must write. I rejoice to find your health and spirits allow you the whole enjoyment of your solitude and your blossoms. I hope you find at Sandleford the zephyrs, as well as the verdure and flowers of the spring; but we poor mortals on the Kentish coast are petrified with cold winds. I have, however, the resolution to ramble in the fields, when I had much rather be loitering

tering over a book, from a conviction that any kind of weather is more wholesome than too much Greek: and indeed I have long discovered, that if I do not content myself with a moderate * degree of application, my perverse temperament will render me incapable of any application at all.

You have most iniquitously defrauded me of my Lord Bath's long message, and I am persuaded, I shall be as many weeks in getting it out of your hands, as I was obliged to wait for the work bag and thimble, and at last be cheated in the same manner of one half, for you know in your conscience that I never had the scissars, and the chain, and the nutmeg-grater.

Can you tell me any news of Mrs. Vesey, who seems to have utterly renounced me, for I have not heard from her since the day before the eclipse; so for any thing I know, she may, according to the doctor's doleful song, be carried away to *Jerusalem*. This reminds me of a

* That which Mrs. Carter calls a "moderate degree of application," would, by most scholars, be reckoned hard study. Upon an average she read and wrote from eight to twelve hours a day; generally rising before five o'clock, and retiring to her bed between ten and eleven; and her studies were till much later in life, rarely of the light and "loitering" kind.

much

much nobler entertainment than the doctor's song, for which I am obliged to you. Indeed, I heartily thank you for your recommendation of Patrick's Pilgrim, which I am reading with very great pleasure *. This description of Jerusalem is amazingly fine. If one was to read of such a place, and such company, situated in some very distant region, how should one regret the want of health and riches, and all the other conveniences necessary for undertaking a long journey? But happily neither riches nor health, nor any other external conveniences, are necessary to conduct travellers to this great metropolis of the universe, this general home of the wise and good, of every country, and of every age; but all have equal powers assigned for arriving safely there.

I long to hear from you, though I know I do not deserve it for having so long delayed writing;

* This work is much less known, or at least attended to, than it deserves to be. It was written by Dr. Patrick, the celebrated commentator, afterwards Bishop of Ely. That which is in the Editor's possession, and which was Mrs. Carter's, is the fifth edition, in small quarto, printed in 1678. The language of this excellent book is very pure and good; many passages of it are even brilliant, and it breathes throughout a spirit of sober enthusiasm, and of warm, yet temperate piety, such as is not often found in works of this nature.

but

but I am not well, though not worse than you have often seen.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXII.

Deal, *June* 12, 1764.

Fye upon your nerves, my dear friend, for presuming to think they were at as full liberty to flutter beneath a green tree at Sandleford, as in a crowded room in London. A state of such absolute sequestration from all the bustle of society, is certainly for a short time, a most delightful repose to the spirits; and it is no wonder that those who are capable of thinking like you, should consider it as one of the noblest and most eligible parts of our existence.

Quanto in sua purità bella è natura!
Quanto in sua libertà l'animo è grande!

But beings appointed to the rough exercises of mortal trial, are wisely destituted even of a capacity for the enjoyment of long holidays: and this contemplative elevation of soul, so soothing to our

our indolence, and so flattering to our pride, is too destructive to our active duties, and too inconsistent with our imperfections, to be long supported without that languor and vacuity which brings us back to the ordinary tasks of life, and to a sense of the weaknesses, and of the wants of our disordered nature, which we are too apt to forget during the independence of solitude, and the suspensions of action: a situation in which we shall be strongly tempted to conclude ourselves to be wise and virtuous, while there are no objects to mislead our reason, or excite our passions. The short and imperfect views of the grandeur and dignities of the faculties of the soul, which we are sometimes allowed to take, are a noble incitement to our wishes for a state in which they are capable of being exerted without impediment or interruption: and an encouragement to a cheerful compliance with the humiliating duties of our present condition, to the diligent discharge of which, every future elevation will be proportioned.

I am extremely glad to hear my Lord Bath is in such perfect health and spirits. My aching head is at present very philosophical as to all the vanities of a hat and feather, and finds much greater consolation in a green nosegay. My Lord's wish, and your assent to it, flatters both

my vanity, and my heart. There can be no doubt how gladly I should subscribe to it, if I thought its accomplishment practicable: but as it is not, I do not suffer my thoughts to dwell upon it, but content myself with the pleasure which I feel, in the hopes of meeting you next winter. My spirits are as good as any body's spirits can be who lives in this worky-day world, and not like you, among the birds of the grove, and the flowers of the field.

Oh dear! I have read an article in the papers about the imprisoning a Negro, for calling himself an esquire. I am sadly afraid it is our Black Prince. It is surely a little hard if he is detained merely for this. I never heard of any body being taken up for calling himself a scholar, or a critic, or a man of honor, and yet how many go about this world in unmolested possession of these titles, to which they have no better right, than our poor friend to his esquireship. Seriously, however, I shall be very sorry if he proves a cheat, that I recommended him to your notice, and procured for a rogue that protection for which so many honester people might have been the better. Adieu, my dear friend.

LETTER LXIII.

Deal, *June* 21, 176[illegible].

I GRIEVE for you, my dear friend, you are stifling in the smoke of London, which is a positive evil, though I think if you were now in the country, you could not acquire much positive good, at least at this place; we are alternately scorching and freezing, by a hot sun, and a cold north-east wind, and all our prospects languish for refreshing showers.

I am very glad to hear my Lord Bath is returned in such good health and spirits; but do pray take off some of his Greek, or he will have treasured up such a quantity, that I shall be quite overpowered, and must, in my own defence, be obliged to learn a set of Arabic proverbs, to silence his Attic puns. My vanity is exceedingly flattered and delighted by the piece of blue ribbon, though in this case, with all my partiality to the "*ornament du chapitre*," it would have been equally gratified had the colour been yellow or green, while it was a proof of my being in my Lord Bath's thoughts at the distance of so many miles.

I am ready to make good all that you have promised

promised in my behalf to my cousin Cambridge, the first opportunity I have it in my power: and I hope to produce very sufficient proofs of my kin*. Finding that I wanted a little change of climate, I prevailed on my indolence last week to spend a few days at Wingham, where I have some friends whom I esteem and love, and yet it is always an effort for me to shake off the enchantment which rivets me to a spot. Having satisfied my conscience by this excursion, I proposed to be very quiet and studious as soon as I returned; but by one means or other, I have been daily engaged ever since.

I have promised Miss Talbot to again remind you of the Armenian letters which you have not yet returned; I have heard nothing lately of Emin, so I imagine there is no new intelligence. I heard this week from Madam de Blum, who desires me to keep her alive in your remembrance. When I was at Wingham I met with a treatise

* Mrs. Carter's mother was sole daughter and heiress to Richard Swayne, of Bere, in Dorsetshire, Esq. and was nearly related to the ancient family of Trenchard, of the same county. Richard Owen Cambridge, Esq. a gentleman well known both in the literary and polite world, to whom Mrs. Carter here alludes, married a lady of the Trenchard family. Mrs. Carter's mother brought a large fortune to her father, which he unfortunately lost in the South Sea scheme in 1720.

upon

upon eloquence, by Dr. Leland. (Philip of Macedon *) I had not time to read half of it, but from what I did read, it so much pleased me, that I cannot help recommending it very strongly to you. It is an answer to some strange assertions of Bishop Warburton on this subject, in his book upon Grace. I am tired and sleepy, so adieu.

LETTER LXIV.

Deal, *July* 1, 1764.

I was beginning to form some uneasy apprehensions about your silence, my dear friend, and particularly about my Lord Bath, though I was so fortunate as not to hear of his illness, till your letter, at the same time, gave me the com-

* Dr. Thomas Leland, of Trinity College, Dublin, who wrote the Life of Philip. See a particular account of his controversy with Warburton, in Dr. Magee on the Atonement, &c. vol. i. p. 226, edit. 4, note; a work which every Christian should read: so copious, as to leave hardly any thing on that most interesting subject unsaid, and so conclusive, as to leave no doubt on the mind of any candid reader. The Christian world is under a great obligation to this able and pious writer.

fort of knowing he was out of danger, at which I most heartily rejoice. I hope it will please God to continue him to us as long as life can have any enjoyment to himself, and this I trust for a constitution so good, and a temper so happy, may yet be for some years. God grant it may be long before you receive the shock to which you imagine yourself so unequal; nothing is to be inferred from the present hurry on your spirits; and I am sure you must be convinced that with every trial there is allotted a sufficient degree of strength to support it, whenever it is properly sought.

This sheet has laid three days on my table, and however anxious I was to finish it, I could not. Your letter of to-night has rather disappointed me, as I fear by your account the danger is not yet over, or your spirits would have been more raised. Yet I still hope that the first alarm you suffered operates too strongly on your fears, and that the present unpleasant circumstances will only retard, not prevent, the recovery of our amiable friend. I hope you will still continue to give me an account, as I shall be very anxious both for him and you. Most sincerely do I join with you in begging that God would be pleased to lengthen his opportunities for virtue, and his preparation for happiness, and continue him a

blessing

blessing to his friends. At this distance it is impossible to judge of the many and various circumstances for hope and fear which occur in such an illness, but so far as I can collect, the lowness of your spirits represents the danger in too strong a light. Dr. Heberden, I have heard, is by no means apt to form too sanguine expectations about his patients, and therefore his opinion that the difficulty was got over, I hope may be depended upon.

I feel a very sincere grief for what you suffer, and most earnestly wish I was with you. God forbid that the event which you sometimes are apt to apprehend should happen: but if it should, I am persuaded my father would not have the least objection to my coming to you, nor would it prevent my coming to town at my usual time, if nothing else unforeseen hindered me. But no such event I hope will happen *. My spirits sink

* Lord Bath died on the 7th of this month. There had been for many years the most tender and intimate friendship between him and Mr. and Mrs. Montagu; in which Mrs. Carter also had no small share. Whatever may be thought of his public conduct, he appears to have been extremely amiable in his private life, and much beloved by his friends. Like his political antagonist, Sir Robert Walpole, he could when

"——Uncumber'd by the venal tribe,
Smile without art, and win without a bribe."

in writing upon the supposition, so I will only add on this subject, that you can never be in any distress, in which you imagine I can be of any use, but so far as depends on myself, you may always command me.

I most earnestly entreat you to endeavour to keep your spirits quiet, and to continue to take the air, which is absolutely necessary for you, and habit will make the recollections which affect your spirits less painful. It will not, I hope, be long before the symptoms of recovery appear more steady; but it will be long, I fear, before your health will recover the shock which it must suffer from your fears. My own feelings upon every occasion of this sort are so strong, that I am very ill qualified to preach to others; besides I could say nothing, but what would be better suggested by your own reflections; so I can only recommend you to the only effectual consolation, amidst all the griefs and disappointments of this varying world, and assure you of my being with the tenderest affection, &c.

LETTER LXV.

Hill Street, *September* 10, 1764.

Here I am, my dearest friend, but where are you? Not in that chair, alas! in which my eyes now vainly seek the dear object which so perpetually interests my heart. I have placed both your chair and my own in our usual position, that it may at least help to impress your *ideal presence*, the more strongly on my imagination. When I am once arrived at a place where I have never been accustomed to see or hear you, I shall naturally expect no more than the pleasures of recollection, and of hope: but I know not how in this room to accommodate my thoughts to solitude and silence, which every moment convey a repetition of disappointment.

I got here very safely, I thank God, and was perfectly well conveyed. I felt pretty faint on my arrival, as I had taken nothing but serpent's food * on the road. I have added one more to the miserable instances of people starved by wealth; but that is more your fault than mine,

* This is so quaintly expressed, that it may perhaps be necessary to say that *dust* is meant. See Genesis iii. 14.

for

for if you had not made me a subject worth robbing I should have felt no apprehensions of being robbed, and consequently might with great tranquillity have loitered to drink coffee in my way. Mrs. Mony has however supplied every delicacy of this kind, and by infinite ells of bread and butter my strength is exceedingly well repaired. I have sent the letter to my Lord Lyttelton, and I have delivered my messages to Israel, he will endeavour to get the watch finished to send as you directed, but it is not yet done, and he will get the ivory letters. I have found Garcilasso, which I have delivered to Israel's care. You will be at least amused by the history, though I think it will not quite suit your purpose. The Incas did indeed produce a great reformation amongst the savages whom they conquered. Yet they did not transform them from brutes to human creatures; it was only from wild beasts to tame ones. A multitude almost wholly destitute of arts and commerce, and of every improvement, and every temptation of polished life, requires very little more legislation than a flock of sheep.

Since I wrote the above, I have had two visitors, Miss Sutton * and my Lord Lyttelton; his

* A very amiable friend of Mrs. Carter, daughter of Sir Richard Sutton. To her some of Mrs. Carter's verses are addressed.

Lordship

Lordship looks and affirms that he is perfectly well, and hopes to be with you on Friday, *au plus tard*. Miss Sutton brought me an invitation to dine with Mrs. Johnstone * to-morrow, but this I know not well how to do, especially as it would answer no particular purpose, as there is to be company; so I will endeavour to get a *tête-à-tête* with her to-morrow morning.

Tuesday.

How did you sleep last night? and how do you do, my dear friend? and what have you been doing, and what have you been thinking of to-day? I was too much fatigued last night to write another line; but I slept pretty well; but have had a harassing day. I set out in the morning, and executed my father's commission, and went to see my uncle, whom I found, poor man, in a deplorable state of suffering; I entreated, and he promised to see Dr. Fothergill. I fear there is very little hope for him; but if he can have any mitigation of his pain, it will be a great blessing; any absolute cure, I fear, never is to be expected; seeing my uncle is so ill, and

* Daughter of Daniel Pulteney, Esq. cousin to the late Lord Bath. She married William Johnstone, Esq. who afterwards took the name of Pulteney, and succeeded, on his brother's decease, to the Scotch Baronetage.

having

having a good many people to talk to, greatly fatigued my spirits. I then returned to Hill-street, altered my dress, and called for a minute on Mrs. Howe, who expressed great vexation at the disappointment of her hopes of seeing you. I next proceeded to Mrs. Johnstone. I mentioned the affair of the will, and gave her your opinion and my own, on the absolute necessity, in all honor and conscience, of Mr. Remond's speaking to the General; so, I imagine, she will not oppose it, when Mr. Remond comes to town. She does not exactly know when the General will return from Mr. Burward's, but will let you know, as soon as she does. I think you mentioned some intention of writing him an invitation; would it not be better to send it soon? as it may be too late after you know of his return to town. Mrs. Johnstone exprest her difficulties about proposing to the General her taking the Pulteney name. She said she had writ a rough copy of a letter to him, which she shewed me, but was at a loss to guess whether it would be best to send it or not. I told her I was persuaded you would give her your opinion of it, so she gave it me to enclose to you, and begs your advice about it; you will be so good as to return it to her, and counsel her how to proceed; for, poor soul, she seems a good deal perplexed, and

indeed

indeed her situation, with such a head as the General's is very difficult. Her letter to him seems to me, to be wrote with sense and spirit, but what effect it might have upon him, I know not. I am sure she will gladly be guided by your opinion to send it or not, and she exprest the strongest sense of her obligation, for the very kind concern which you have discovered for her interest. It would grieve your heart to hear what she suffers, from the General's strange, inconsistent, indelicate treatment of her, whenever she sees him.

From Mrs. Johnstone's, I took a chair to the Bridge, and from thence proceeded to Lambeth, from whence I am early returned to repose my aching head on your pillow; I heartily wish it may be possest of any charm to render you the subject of my dreams. I had hoped to have finished all my business to-day, and have had a quiet day at Lambeth to-morrow, but I must go and enquire what Dr. Fothergill says of my poor uncle.

How can I sufficiently thank you, my dearest friend, for all the happiness which I have lately enjoyed? I have no way of repaying the obligations I owe you, but by loving you with increasing esteem and affection, and being, with inexpressible tenderness and gratitude,

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXVI.

Deal, *September* 17, 1764.

It was a very particular joy to me, my dear friend, just as I arrived at my greatest distance from you, to receive an account of your being so well. Heaven continue to you the blessing of quiet sleep, and that, I hope, will contribute to give cheerfulness to your waking hours. And now I will give you the account you desire of my journey here. I left Hill-street at half after five, the day before yesterday; the rain, which had fallen the day before, had extremely mended the roads, and I suffered very little from the dust. I got to Canterbury a little after two; but, to my great disappointment, found my friend, Miss Blomer, not yet returned from Margate. After refreshing myself by an entire change of apparel, I went to the Deanery in hopes of seeing Mrs. Scott, and giving her and myself the pleasure of talking about you; but I was again frustrated, for Mrs. Scott was gone out to dinner, so no conjecture could be formed about her return. As it was so early, and the afternoon so very fine, I thought my very best scheme would be to set

out

out for Wingham, which I reached about six. A strong thunder shower, the night before, had so brightened and renewed the country, that I travelled through all the verdure and freshness of spring. Mr. and Mrs. Nairn, like the rest of mankind, are gone to Margate; but, from an inability to move, I found good Mrs. Hall quietly at home; I slept there; and next morning, went to breakfast with Mrs. Cosnan, and then came to my quiet home.

In making a comparison between the Berkshire views, and those through which I travelled this week, my Kentish vanity was humbled to the last degree. It had some resource, however, in pleading, that the comparison was not just, unless my imagination could reduce Berkshire to its more natural appearance, and divest it of all the adventitious beauties, which it owed to an enchantment, that threw a gayer coloring over every object, and placed it in a fairer light.

I so perfectly agree with you in every thing which you have determined about Mrs. Johnstone's letter, that when I sent it, I was going to propose the very same alterations both in the letter and the manner of conveyance; except that I not only wished the absence of bad counsellors, when the General should receive it, but the presence of a good one, and therefore wanted

that,

that, by some means or other, he should have it when you were at his elbow. But I forbore explaining my opinion, as I knew you would contrive every thing in the properest way.

We had an account of my uncle last night; he continues in the same state; and, sad to say, Dr. Fothergill's medicines have not procured him any ease. He does not appear to be in any immediate danger; but this also, is far from being a comfort to a person in such a state of extreme suffering: God, I hope, will support him, under a trial, for which human art can find no relief. I have received a letter from Madame de Blum, she has found more benefit from Pyrmont than from the Spa; she expresses great concern for our loss. Lady Mary Coke has given her a most melancholy account of Mademoiselle Blankart, who is reduced to a skeleton, and has lost all her vivacity.

You charge me with cruelty, in wishing you to regret my absence. I own the fact, but the principle I utterly deny. I did indeed wish you to regret my absence, but it was only to such a degree as to make you think with pleasure on the prospect, which I trust there is, of our meeting soon again; and I judged for you by my own feelings, as I would not give up either this regret, or this expectation with regard to you, for the gayest amuse-

amusements of enlivened spirits, in which my heart had no concern. I was quite scandalized to the last degree, at your saying, in your letter, that you would not "communicate your gloom to me;" this seems a kind of denying my right and title to share in all the genuine feelings of your heart; a right which you have given me, and which I will never quietly resign. Your powers of entertainment, and your counterfeit spirits, are extremely at the service of the rest of the world.—Ever yours.

LETTER LXVII.

Deal, *September* 25, 1764.

WHERE are you, my dear friend, at this hour, when I have so lately been accustomed to expect you, to cheer the languor, which succeeds a day of stupifying pain, and by thinking for me, to make me forget my incapacity of thinking for myself? But you were at the distance of above an hundred miles, and I have no better companion than my green nosegay, to enliven the close of a solitary and inactive day. Yet certainly mere solitude and inactivity, are no justifiable subjects

subjects of complaint; on the contrary, amidst so many "natural shocks as flesh is heir to," one ought to be extremely thankful for an exemption from such pains, as require an harassing attendance from others, and which engage all the powers of body and mind, by the exercise of strong suffering, in an attention to one's self. The evil can never be great, which gives no interruption to the delicate feelings of the heart, and which demands neither anodyne, nor cordial, but the tenderness and the conversation of a friend. May God continue to preserve both you and me, from any such state of suffering, as might render us insensible to the blessing we enjoy in each other. With our present merely imperfect health, we may go on extremely well; and perhaps, to this circumstance, our friendship may owe a softer affection, than is consistent with the gay independence of unchecked spirits and uninterrupted ease.

I exceedingly applaud your morning airings *en plein carosse*, and have no objection, if it contained as many as a travelling waggon; my only dread is your *tête-à-tête* with my Arabic rival in a post-chaise.

I rejoice in the entertainment you have received from Lord Lyttelton's History, and hope you have been upon the whole, much the better for

for visitors. I should imagine, from the anecdotes which I have heard you mention of Lord Herbert, that his history of himself, must be a very singular piece. Dr. Leland gives an account of the *miracle*, and as far as I remember, his observations on it are very sensible and fair. It is surely very extraordinary that Lord Herbert, who denied, I know not whether it was not even the possibility of a revelation for instruction of mankind, should, however, think it very reasonable that Heaven should interpose to give an *imprimatur* to his book *.

I am very glad to hear of the improvement of our dear little nephew †, and am very much flattered by his remembrance of me; I took his kiss from your letter, and beg you will return it him *ad libitum*; I hope, by being used to my name, he will recollect me when I see him again; for to be sure you will carry me to see him at Ealing.

* The observation is probably not new, but it is very just. It verifies the adage that unbelievers must be possessed of very strong faith. There is, however, every reason to believe that Lord Herbert had at least, the merit of sincerity; but he was singularly mistaken in his estimate of the value of his own book, which is little known, and seems, even at the time, to have made no impression on the world. His Life was printed in this year at the Strawberry-hill Press.

† Who was afterwards adopted by Mrs. Montagu, and became her heir.

Poor

Poor little James Pennington was very ill yesterday. He desired his father to pray for him, and added, he hoped God would forgive him all his sins. I was extremely glad to find, that he has so soon a conviction how much all human creatures need forgiveness *.

It gave me a very sincere joy, to hear that Mrs. Boscawen's health is so much better; I beg my very affectionate compliments and congratulations to her. She is too valuable and too amiable, for me not to be much interested for her, on her own account, and it is impossible for me not to be tenderly concerned in the preservation of every friend of yours. Mrs. Vesey's description of her adventure is so finely painted, that I am sure it must entertain you; and I cannot be sure of this and not send it you; but I beg you will be so good as to return it when you next write.

I am very glad to hear that poor Mrs. Johnstone's affairs are likely to take a more favorable turn.—I have a good deal of dependance on the General's visit to you, for the promotion of her interest, and, indeed, properly speaking, of her right; I mean with regard to her own family

* He was then about seven years of age; and such an occurrence reflects more credit on the parents who brought him up with so just a sense of religion, than it does on the child himself.

claim. Adieu, my dear friend, think of me, and regret me as much as you please, I am perfectly assured you will never exceed the affection and tenderness with which I am, &c. &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

Deal, *October* 2, 1764.

Are you in your dressing-room alone, my dear friend, and wishing for me, with as much impatience as I am wishing for you? I am just returned from a dinner of twelve people, with a head confused by the flutter of a mixed company, and a heart very little engaged by the uninteresting topics of general conversation. After this vacancy of thought, and this suspension of sentiment, how do I long to supply the one, and revive the other by a *tête-à-tête* with you? Yet I should quarrel with myself for growing tired of a good-humoured social party, if my health did not so utterly incapacitate me from enjoying it. All that this will allow me to feel, is a very real pleasure at leaving the company exceedingly well

amused, without my being able to contribute any thing to their entertainment.

You told me this was your birth-day, and I have been reflecting, with great thankfulness, on the blessing which it has conveyed to me. May God grant you very many years of improving virtue, improving health, and improving happiness. I can form no prayer for you, in which I do not feel a tender and personal concern myself.

I perfectly agree with you that our Sylph can be in no danger, but from ideal forms, and romantic attitudes. There is nothing of mere vulgar mortality in her, but the love of London, and that I fear for her, and for us, is not likely to be gratified this winter. Fye upon you for not sending me a frank for her. How do you think such an etherial being should be encumbered by the smallest "piece of coined plate that "walketh about in money." It is well that Sylphs can slide through a key-hole, or I should expect to hear she was peeping through a prison-grate, for the postage of my letters.

I will look for the passage in Plato against I write next; for, as there is no index, I cannot readily find it now. I have been trying to read Quintilian, because you seemed to think I should. I have looked over as much as I could, but as to

going

going regularly through with it, I could just as soon read a book of cookery *. His lamentation for the loss of his wife and children, would be extremely affecting, if there was not such a mixture of impiety in it, as is quite shocking.

My perverse head has been very bad for several days, but is now getting better; but I have no security against its tricks: however, at worst, there is no manner of need for the kind concern, which you express about it, so far as appears at present, I have no mortal distemper but my years. The first motive for which I ought, and I hope I do wish for long life, is the hope of growing better; the next, because it is an object to you. Indeed, I am afraid, I am apt to form too lively and pleasing expectations from the flattering prospects which you often set before me, of passing much of my time with you. This view throws a lustre over declining life, and my sun sets in purple, and in gold. But when I reflect that the activity of your spirit, will hurry you into pursuits, where the languor of mine will not suffer me to accompany you, all this gay vision va-

* The Editor fears this will be considered as a great impeachment of Mrs. Carter's taste; but he humbly confesses that his own is so bad, that he entirely agrees with her, though, in the college where he "lounged seven years," he did contrive to yawn through him.

nishes into nothing, and solitary life expires in the cold, blank darkness of a winter's night. But I do not suffer my thoughts to dwell on such unreasonable cares about futurity. If I fix my first hopes for happiness on that Friend who is never absent, I shall, in every period of life, be as happy as it is really good for me to be, and it is my duty thankfully to enjoy every present blessing, without enquiring how long it may continue*. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER LXIX.

Deal, *October* 9, 1764.

As well as I was able, I have endeavoured, my dear friend, to abridge what Plato has said on the subject of tragic poetry. As it takes up above one half of the last book of the Republic, I could not undertake to translate the whole, or to transcribe the Latin translation. There is in

* The Editor hopes it will not be deemed an insult to the understanding of the reader, if he ventures to point out this passage, as one of singular beauty, as well as written upon the best principles. And it should be remembered that none of these Letters were written under an idea that they ever would meet the public eye.

the

the original, such strength and clearness of reasoning, such a spirit of virtue, and such elegance of diction, that, to be sure, it is monstrous treatment of Plato, to send you such a rude, imperfect sketch; but it will serve the purpose of shewing you his opinion of the effect of tragedy on the manners of a people; which was what you wanted to know. I have a notion that Lord Bolingbroke has been somewhere very flippant and witty on the doctrine of ideas; but it is a much easier task to ridicule what Plato has written, than to write like Plato: I will make a faint attempt that you may understand him.

Plato introduces the subject, by affirming, that there is only one original idea, belonging to things of the same class. Suppose, for instance, ever so great a number of chairs and tables, they are all comprehended under the idea of chair and table, and, according to this idea, the artificer forms his work; for no artificer can form the *idea* itself. He then asks by what name, that artificer is to be called, who forms, not only every thing that can be produced, by every single mechanic; but likewise all plants and animals, the sun and stars, and, in short, every thing in heaven and on earth? This wonderful artificer is pronounced to be no other than a person, who, by

by a mirror, receives and forms all the objects to which it presents itself.

To this it is objected, that such forms are only apparent, not real.

The philosopher answers that it is in the very same manner that a *painter* forms a chair or a table; and that even the *joiner*, is not an original former, as he can only make a particular chair or table, but not the original *idea;* so that he forms only something like reality, but not the reality itself. That there are three kinds of chairs and tables, one which exists in nature (in other words, the original idea), which is the operation of God; a second, the work of the joiner; and the third, formed by the painter. Thus the imitator, is at the third remove from the natural and original production.

Further, the painter imitates no more than the work of the artificer, and even that, merely according to the appearance; because only a small part of each object is within his reach, and only the image even of that part. Thus he may paint, for instance, a carpenter, or any other mechanic, without understanding the arts of either, and yet so as to make children and ignorant people, at a distance, think it to be really a carpenter.

All this doctrine is then applied to the subject of

tragedy, and, it is affirmed, that the works of tragic poets are founded on appearance only, and that they are at the third remove, from the ruling principle, and from truth. That Homer, (you know that the ancients considered Homer as a tragic writer), however he may be celebrated, as understanding all arts and sciences, was merely an imitator of them in others. That no distemper was ever cured, no commonwealth regulated, no legislator ever produced, no war conducted, nor any system of education ever formed by his means; as by Solon, and Lycurgus, &c. &c.

He goes on, that all the tragic poets, beginning from Homer, are only imitators of the images of virtue; that they do not reach the truth, and that the imitator has no sufficient knowledge of the subjects which he imitates.

It is next enquired what part of the human composition, this imitative art respects.

He observes how different bodies, of the same magnitude and position, appear, when seen at different distances, and through different mediums; that this deception is a subject for the tricks of jugglers; and it is to be corrected by reducing things to number, weight, and measure. That it is the superior part of the soul which thus determines objects by their true standards;

ards ; and the inferior part which is carried away by appearances.

To this inferior part of the soul it is, that the imitative art is addrest. Its subject is the imitation of men, engaged in either forced or voluntary circumstances and actions, and from them determining their state, to be either good or evil, and, consequently, either grieving or rejoicing at their situation. He then shews that man has the same contradictory opinions with regard to actions and circumstances, as had been before described, with regard to the objects of sight.

A good man under the loss of a son, or any other object of affection, will bear his misfortune more moderately than another, yet he will feel it. It is reason, and the supreme law which command him to struggle against his grief, and it is passion which prompts him to indulge it. Passion, from its composed and various nature, is a subject for imitation ; but the reasonable and composed part of the soul, cannot easily be imitated, nor, if it could, would it be easily understood, especially in the tumult of a mixed multitude, collected in a theatre, whose subjects of imitation are the passions of others. So that the poet, to gain applause, does not adapt himself to the superior part of the soul, but to the irritable,

ble, and various temper of the passions, which is so easy a subject of imitation. It is with justice, therefore, that the tragic poet is excluded from a well-governed commonwealth; since, by raising, supporting, and strengthening the inferior parts of the soul, he destroys the rational faculty. As he, who in a state, puts power into the hands of bad men, undoes the good, and betrays his country; so the tragic poet, introduces a bad government into the soul of each individual, by indulging that irrational and indiscriminating part of it, which is the furthest removed from truth. Even good men are in danger of being corrupted by tragedy. For the very best of us praise the art of the poet, in proportion as we sympathize, and are affected by the representation of misfortunes on the stage; and, by thus nourishing and strengthening our disposition to pity, in the case of others, it will be very difficult to restrain it in our own. The conclusion is, that no other poetry is to be admitted into the state, except hymns to the gods, and encomiums on good men. Thus far Plato *.

There

* This abridgment of Plato's argument may possibly appear dull and uninteresting, yet it was thought right to preserve

There is no describing how immoderately I am scandalized, at your calling Plato a sophister, and a pedant; there is no possible reparation that you can make him, but by learning Greek, reading the original, and from thence confuting your own scandal. Pray do not lay any thing to the charge of Plato from what I have here written, as it is so wretchedly short and imperfect, and only gives his conclusions, without a detail of the arguments from whence they are drawn. To a reader less penetrating than you, I am sensible this abridgement would be utterly unintelligible. One of the Daciers has, I think, translated the Republic, so *en attendant* your learning Greek, do pray get that. How far have you proceeded in your task?

I rejoice to hear that the poor Duchess of Beaufort is relieved from her terrors about Lady Mary. I am very glad Mrs. Boscawen will be at Bath when you are there, but I wish it was before November, for I dread for you the damp rooms at Sandleford. I was very glad to hear

serve it, in order to shew, if any such proof be necessary, that the intercourse between the two ladies, was not

"——— De villis domibusve alienis;
Nec malè necne Lepos saltet; sed quod pingis ad nos
Pertinet, et nescire malum est."

from

from Lady d'Aeth to-day, that Mrs. Scott escaped the fright and danger of being in the Dean of Canterbury's coach, when it was overturned in going from Knowlton. Adieu, my dearest friend.

LETTER LXX.

Deal, *October* 17, 1764.

I HEARTILY rejoice, my dear friend, that you were in spirits to be flippant, though it was to be at the expence of Plato. I never read Malbranche, but by the quotations which I have seen from him, his system does not seem to be exactly the same with that of Plato. On so abstruse a subject, I suppose it is not easy to form any very distinct notion what either of them meant. Plato's system appears to be that the archetypes of all created things, and of all productions of art, are the formation of God, and not the work of human invention. If he had affirmed that every man sees these archetypes as they exist in the divine mind, your objection, that all copies from the same original pattern, must be exactly alike, would be difficult to answer. But

But Plato, I think, does not affirm any such thing. On the contrary, he asserts that our limited faculties allow us only an imperfect view of the real manner of existence of any thing.

A human artificer forms his works upon certain proportions of parts to each other; but he does not form the proportions themselves. His work will be more or less perfect, in the degree, that his knowledge of these proportions is more or less so. That exact adaptation of the proportions, which would render any work absolutely perfect, was never attained by any mortal man, consequently the archetype can exist only where Plato has fixed it. I am awed by this subject, and afraid of expressing myself improperly; but, I believe, you will find from what I have said, that Plato's system, is something different from what you apprehend it; at least, if I understand it right.

With regard to the subject of tragedy, if one could but conjure up the spirit of Plato, he would retort your charge of sophistry, and I should be extremely glad to see you both fairly battle it out. You say, "history relates not what appertains to the superior part of the soul, but the "effects of the passions of men:" very true; but a calm reflection on the effects of the passions of men, will operate on the mind very differently, from

from the emotion which is produced by a representation on the stage, of the actual workings of those passions, which hurry away the passions of spectators along with them. The reader of history, is a critic of the passions, not a partner in their agitations. The *superior part of the soul*, forms an unbiassed judgment on actions, and draws an example from the event. The spectator of a theatrical performance, is an interested party, and soon becomes too violently engaged in the bustle of the drama, to allow the mind to comment on the tendency of the passions. Most of Plato's reasons for the rejection of Homer, do not subsist at present; but certainly were unanswerable, at a time when there was no express revelation of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being; when so very few were capable of forming any becoming ideas of them, from the powers and exercise of their own understanding; and when the multitude would be so strongly influenced by the poetical mythology, and from the representation of weak, capricious, and wicked deities, derive a flattering encouragement, to the lowest, and worst of human passions. He is equally capable of vindication, I believe, with regard to the tragic poets, whatever judgment is to be formed of the subject in general. Plato does not prohibit either a sympathy with the misfortunes

fortunes of others, or a feeling of our own; this absurdity of the Stoics, was not derived from the Socratic school. All that Plato requires, is, that the passions should as far as possible be moderated, instead of being heightened by artificial incitements *.

* Mrs. Carter was very partial to Plato, and thought that he wanted nothing but the help of that Divine Revelation, which he desired so much, and which he knew was to come. He said that there was no more efficacious way of instructing youth, than by Odes and Songs, but concludes that "this must be the work of God, or of some Divine Person." (2d Book de Legibus, as quoted by Bishop Patrick.)

He also foretold, as it were, as Grotius expresses it, that, in order that a truly righteous man should be exhibited, it is necessary that his virtue should be despoiled of all its ornaments, so that he should be considered by others as a wicked man; (*and he was numbered among the transgressors*, Isaiah liii. 12;) be derided; (*they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him;*) and at last be hanged; ("suspendatur," *hanged on a tree*, Acts v. 30.) Grot. de Verit. lib. iv.

So likewise he says that Socrates told Alcibiades, that, "in proper time, a Divine Person would come into the "world, who, out of his care and tender regard to mankind, "would remove all doubts, disperse all darkness, and fully "instruct them how to present all their prayers, and praises, "and religious offerings, to the Supreme Being, in a pure "and acceptable manner." Alcibiad. ii. as cited by Blackwall, Sacred Classics, vol. ii. p. 111.

Let Deists, and those who talk of the sufficiency of what they call *Natural Religion*, consider well the opinion of these wise and good men, of the necessity of a Divine Revelation.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear friend, my best compliments to Mrs. Scott, and as many kisses as you like to our darling; I wish the frank was big enough for me to send him the pretty little kitten that is playing by my side, delighted with its own shadow. I am glad you have at last written to our Sylph. My head aches so outrageously, that I know not whether my letter may not be absolute and unintelligible nonsense. I believe, in general, I meant something or other, but I certainly feel what I mean, when I subscribe myself, yours, &c.

P. S. Mrs. Howe desires I would keep her in your memory. Do not you rejoice that Captain Howe has escaped the danger of his shipwreck? Very happily all his people too were saved.

LETTER LXXI.

Deal, *October* 25, 1764.

INDEED, my dear friend, it cost me a world of reasoning to prevent a thousand foolish fears, at not hearing from you last post, as I had great difficulty to prevent enquiring the cause of it; but I thought it would look like laying you under

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an uneasy constraint to write on a particular day; and so I at last determined to wait till to-night, which has given me the happiness of knowing that you are quite well.

Pray do not charge any of my nonsense to the account of Plato, for, I believe, there was not one syllable of his in my last letter; but only an attempt to defend him, and explain his meaning. I meant *proportions* in rather a more general sense, than the strict mathematical and theoretical way, in which you take it. After all, in every sense,

> "Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,
> Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum."

This is not more true in a moral, than in a physical sense; and this *modus*, and these *fines*, are in their absolute perfection inapplicable by mortal man; and hence arises the difference between the works of creation, and of art. But what has such a head as mine to do with metaphysics?

I am heartily glad to find that your affairs in the North are likely to come to a conclusion. In hopes that a journey next summer may effectually settle this vexatious business, I shall be glad when you are set out. But I hope you are not to pay the tax of a personal visit, to this North star every year for life.

Miss

Miss Talbot has not given me any account of Emin, since that which I mentioned to you, and which I received at Sandleford. She did not mention him in a letter which I had about a week ago.

I am as impatient to read Æschylus as you can be, for all the quotations which I have seen from him are astonishingly great. But, I believe, he has very little mixture of the graces of Sophocles. It may be some comfort to you, in malice to Plato, to hear, if you do not recollect it, that Lycurgus, whom he mentions with so much honor for his legislative wisdom, was the first who introduced the works of Homer, from Asia into Greece. I heartily wish for the honor of Plato, that he had copied Lycurgus, as little in other instances, as he had done in this. The only disgraceful parts of his Republic, are those in which he has imitated the institutions of Sparta *.

I am

* It may be observed of Plato, that all that was bad in his institutions, arose from the manners of the age, or from its corrupt and unsettled opinions upon moral subjects. Of this last vital error, it will appear, from a former note, that he was fully sensible; and nothing can prove more strongly, the necessity of a Revelation from Heaven, in order to discern right from wrong, than that the wisdom of Plato could not enable him to distinguish vice from virtue. It is a

I am glad Mrs. Scott is the better for her journey. I wish you were at Bath, and when you have been there, I shall wish you at London, which will infallibly cost me a third wish, to be there with you. This wish indeed would pretty equally present itself, wherever you go, if I had an equal probability of its being accomplished. Did I tell you that Mrs. Howe fancies our Sylph will be in England this year: I wish I knew on what this fancy is grounded. Adieu.

LETTER LXXII.

Deal, *November* 8, 1764.

You certainly judged right, that I should receive great pleasure from the intelligence which you were so good to give me. God

mournful proof of the weakness of mere human powers, that this great man, "expressly allowed of excessive drinking at "the festival of Bacchus; that he advised men to continue "the idolatry of their ancestors; that he directed that *means* "*should be used* to prevent weak children from being brought "up; that he recommends a community of women, and "advises that soldiers should not be restrained from sensual "indulgences, even of the worst kinds." See Paley "On "the Morality of the Gospel."

grant you, my dear friend, very many years of health, and peace, and cheerfulness, to enjoy this accession of prosperity! You have provided yourself with one circumstance absolutely necessary to the enjoyment of riches, that conviction which you express, of their insufficiency of themselves, to procure happiness. It is well for our truest interest, that no one external advantage is possest of this power. The great variety of circumstances which must concur to our enjoyment of any single instance of prosperity, is a perpetual call to our sense of dependance on the Supreme Author of every blessing. Wisdom and piety learn from principle, that pride and folly will, first or last, be taught by sad experience; that He, who formed our capacities for happiness, has alone the means, and the power to render us happy.

It will give me great pleasure if you can call at Lambeth: you do not say how long you shall stay in London, but I hope it will not be very long, as I shall be glad to hear you are safe arrived at Bath, whose tepid exhalations will be more beneficial to your rheumatism, than the cold damps of Sandleford. I dont wonder at your unwillingness to part with your sweet little Pet, but you, at present, lose only a play-thing; he, poor child, quits a guide, a guardian, and a friend.

The bustle and variety of Bath, will, I hope, give you some amusement, after your long *sejour* in the North. I am thankful you are not exposed to this doleful weather in your journey, it began yesterday, but this has been the first complete winter's day ; I have been listening to the howling wind, and dashing rain, and surveying the prospect of a stormy sea, for so many hours, that my spirits were sufficiently exhausted by an attention to the sublime, and I was at last glad to betake myself to common life. So I left my room to the tempest, and joined the party at Mrs. Underdown's, whose house is *c'est l'abri* of all the elements.

I am glad to hear your colliery goes on so successfully, and shall be more glad to hear that it is all absolutely settled. If our Hero * will confine his spirit to the defence of his new territory, and employ his talents to render the inhabitants wise and happy, he will be a more truly great man, than if he could carry devastation and death through all Asia, in the character of a conqueror. Yours, &c.

* This relates to the Armenian Emin, to whose life a reference has been already made.

LETTER LXXIII.

Deal, *December* 25, 1764.

I AM indebted to you, my dear friend, for four letters, but I have been much distressed by the alarming illness of my brother and Mrs. Underdown, but, thank God, they are now doing well, and my heart is more at ease than it has been for the last three weeks; and the constant good accounts I had of you from Bath, helped to quiet my feelings, for every day of my life my heart feels some symptom or other, which discovers your importance to its happiness.

Indeed I am not so partial to the Athenians as you suppose; they were very little, if at all inferior to the other Greeks in such actions of brutal cruelty, as cannot be read without shuddering. Only think of whole towns murdered in cold blood, after resigning themselves to the will of their merciless besiegers! The understanding of the Athenians was enlightened by philosophy, and their genius decorated by the graces; but their hearts were the hearts of barbarians. A sad proof that something more than the illumination of speculation, reason, and the fine arts, is necessary

cessary to dispel the darkness of disordered principles, and tame the savage outrage of the passions *. From the bold and rough Thucydides, who dips his pencil in all the horrors of his subject, I am proceeding to the Grecian History of the soft and elegant Xenophon, who describes a battle as Master Stephen —— swears. War and devastation, indeed, are not subjects for the gentle and amiable temper of the Socratic school. Yet Xenophon was a true hero, and has left a noble proof how much the character of a great commander is extended and improved, by the piety and virtues of a good man.

I perfectly acknowledge the truth and justice of all you say on the Roman conquests; which, however unjustifiable in themselves, were directed, by unerring Wisdom, to the noblest and most beneficial purposes. I always feel mortified in comparing the equity and humanity of these rough and unpolished conquerors, at the time when they were most rough and unpolished, with the deceit and cruelty of our favorite Grecians in their most cultivated state.

I am somewhat scandalized at your severe reflection on my favorite Cicero; who, in my opi-

* See the same idea in the note to the preceding letter; but how much more beautifully it is here expressed, the Editor need not point out.

nion,

nion, is by much the most amiable character in their whole history. It is somewhat unfair to survey him only in the decline of his life, when his spirits were sunk in the ruins of his fallen country. Some weaknesses he had, but surely they are to be censured with lenity, in a character distinguished by the brightest virtues, and sullied by no one vice. His desire of glory, though extravagant, can scarcely be called *vanity* as it was the desire of glory, founded on a long course of truly noble and beneficent actions. Only think of him as being questor, and, amidst examples of universal rapine, making use of a power, which others considered as a licence for pillage, to the advantage and happiness of the people he governed *. This is only a single instance of his virtue; but the post cramps my genius, or I would say much more, in revenge for your censure of almost the only good-natured man (to mention no other qualification,) among a world of savages; but perhaps you will think me very

* Yet Cicero, as it appears by his own letters, acquired immense property, although he lived at a great expence. His "*O fortunatam natam me Consule Romam*" can scarcely be excused even by Mrs. Carter's apology; yet, as Juvenal observes, his life would have been in no danger if he had never spoken better. Mr. Hook's estimate of Cicero's character, in his Roman History, appears to be very just, though certainly widely different from Mrs. Carter's.

irre-

irreverent in my expressions about a people who are usually represented as *heroes* and *demi-gods*.

Had you a letter last night from our Sylph, and did she tell you that she hopes to be in England in January? If not, I am sure you will thank me for this intelligence. She expresses all the pleasure she feels, in the hopes of seeing us again, which our longing for her deserves. For the joy she proposes in meeting us, she declares that she forgives all my enormities; but the wretch does not say a word of any enormities of yours. And if you have none of your own, I desire you will take one half of mine, and, in return, I will take one half of your virtues, for I think it is very fit we should be partners in this instance, as well as in her heart.

I heartily rejoice in the happiness and pleasure you have enjoyed at Bath; when one has a few people whom one loves and likes, the din of a public place is only like the sound of a distant fiddle, that helps to enliven one's spirits. If my invalids continue improving, on Monday fortnight I shall be in London; I am sure I need not say how happy I shall be; the thoughts of being near you so soon, will help to shorten time, which thinking of you always does with

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

Deal, *June* 21, 1765.

It is a perfect age, my dear friend, since I have heard from you. The hope you gave me in your last letter, that it should soon be followed by another, has made me defer writing; but I am now grown quite impatient, and can no longer avoid interrupting your solitude, of which I hope you have hitherto had as perfect an enjoyment as health, good spirits, and fine weather, could give you. I am not willing to add a quiet mind, as I hope you must have felt some twitches of remorse for suffering me to remain so long without the least signification of my being ever in your thoughts.

My poor uncle * is at last delivered from a painful life, and, I hope, in possession of eternal ease. When my father went to town a fortnight ago, we did not apprehend that he was in any immediate and particular danger, but he conti-

* A worthy and respectable man; a silk-merchant in Bishopsgate-street. He was in partnership with Mr. Vere (whose sister he married,) uncle to the present Banker of that name.

nued

nued every day growing worse. If he could have been of any use or comfort to him, it would have repaid the pain of his being present on so melancholy an occasion; but he was never able to speak after my father's arrival; therefore it was unlucky he went, as his spirits must have been very much affected; I hope he will come home the beginning of next week. My uncle's fortune was, I believe, about twenty-two thousand pounds. For that share of it which he has bestowed on my father's family, we have great reason to be thankful to Heaven, and grateful to his memory.

This was begun two days ago; but my sad head would not let me finish it. My father is returned to-night. I hope it will please God to prolong his life, that his children, to whom he has been the best of fathers, may have the comfort of seeing him, not only easy in his own circumstances, but without anxiety on their account, which, to a father like him is the highest happiness this world has to bestow; and he will most sensibly feel the blessing of their prosperity.

I have received the covers and the little ivory figure, which bears so little resemblance of the original, that the chief pleasure I receive from it, is in the kindness of the intention. I rejoice that you hear so good an account of our friend. She

has

has been an arrant Turk to me in the article of writing, for I have had only one note and one card from her, ever since I came to Deal.

I enclose you a letter from Mrs. Howe, which I forgot to send in my last. You may imagine I shall very readily join in the request contained in it. You have got the start of me in Tacitus, for I waited till I heard from you, so have not began: I see we shall quarrel. I have always honored Tacitus, for throwing a cloud over the blaze of false glory in the character of Augustus, and for counteracting that fatal principle, which separates admiration from esteem.

I am happy in every instance of the partiality of your affection for me. But my uncle has acted more equitably and kindly, in making a whole family pleased with the general advantages he has been so good as to bestow on them, than if he had made any one of them rich, in exclusion of the rest; this is my real opinion in answer to your very kind wishes about

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXV.

Deal, *August* 9, 1765.

Do not appoint me to the office of your bard, my dear friend, unless you consent to my chusing Arminius for the hero of the song; for I must confess I have a much greater respect for this rude defender of the liberty of his countrymen, than for the more civilized barbarians who enslaved them. I have, with "weary steps and slow," at length overtaken you in Tacitus. I think you have rather too little toleration for poor Agrippina. Besides the general example of the Roman ladies, who had very little delicacy in this respect, the perpetual dangers to which she found herself exposed from the cruelties of Tiberius, and the execrable envy and ambition of Livia (the sovereign governess of your hero, Augustus. I could not advance a step without this spiteful parenthesis.) would too naturally lead her to seek a protector. In reading the History of the Romans, considered as a people, can one help reflecting on that retributive justice of heaven, by which those who had been so remarkably distinguished by a general invasion of the liberty of man-

mankind, at last sunk into such a deplorable condition of slavery to tyrants of their own raising; a slavery perhaps the most disgraceful that ever was suffered by any people under heaven, as it was endured with the most unmanly dejection, and encouraged by the vilest and most abject flattery that ever idolized the cruel and capricious demon of despotic power.

I half envy you the pleasure you would feel on being deceived into such an unprejudiced testimony to the genius of our Sylph. I am glad to hear she appeared in such spirits.

As I have a great dependance on your prudence, not to run any considerable hazard, I rejoice in your evening walks, which I am persuaded give you a pleasure which overpays any slight inconvenience. It is certainly more eligible to be sometimes a little ill, than to lose half the joys of which we are capable, by living under the perpetual apprehension of it.

I was in no manner of danger of confounding indolence with tranquillity. The one is to be considered as a torpor of all the faculties of body and mind; the other, as the silence of the passions, and the only temperament for uniform and consistent virtue; you need not doubt of my hearty concurrence with your prayer for such a blessing to us both.

If

If you do not partake of my moonlight meditations by the sea-side, you have always a very considerable share in the subject of them; your idea will never be lost in the moon, or drowned in the ocean, unless I am transported along with it; not that I have the least intention of satisfying myself with this shadowy enjoyment of your society. On the contrary, I am every day calculating the time when I may hope to see you; and in the brightest splendor of summer suns, and amidst all the beauty of smiling prospects, I look forward with joy to the dark days of January and the smoke of London. If all our hopes were terminated by the grave, what a melancholy must accompany the anticipation of every pleasure, from the reflection that our passage to it, is insensibly wasting that existence which is the foundation of every enjoyment! But by the hope which connects time with eternity, the idea of death vanishes into a trifling interval, or a mere imaginary point *.

* How natural are these ideas to a well-regulated mind; and what sources of consolation do such passages open, to those who have not been in the habit of connecting serious thoughts with their pleasures! How astonishing, as well as delightful, must it be to such persons to perceive the views of eternity adding happiness, instead of a damp, to those of time; and the thoughts of death giving a zest to life!

I shall

I shall be glad to hear that your transactions with Mr. Isaacson have succeeded better than you apprehended.

I am good for nothing to-day, but as well as I expected, after having my spirits greatly affected by an accident which happened in this place yesterday, though, I thank God, it is one in which I have no personal concern. In a crowd of people assembled to see the mayor's shew, a vicious horse got loose, trampled upon several, and hurt two children, in so terrible a manner, that last night it was feared neither of them could live. Some others were hurt, but not so dangerously. One of the children was nine, and the other about five years old. James Pennington was in town to see the show, but providentially was not at the spot where this accident happened. I hear this morning, the children who were so much hurt, are better, so I hope there may be a chance of their recovery. As I was going through Mongeham, the other day, I heard a little voice say, "There is my aunt Tartar." I looked up, and by the help of my glass discovered Montagu, perched in a chamber-window; which is a station which he prefers to that of his companions, in a twopenny school below, and from whence I believe he holds dialogues with every body that passes through the village; for he is the most loqua-

loquacious little dab I ever knew. I could not help giving a world of cautions to the girl who was with him not to let him fall out of the window. I hear, when he went home, he informed his mother, that he had seen his aunt Carter, and she was afraid he should break his neck, by which, I suspect, he held my cautions in great contempt.

I have sent your compliments after Mrs. Underdown, to Wingham, where she has been more than a fortnight. Mrs. Primrose returned from Hampshire, last night, and I am going to dine with her to-day. My brother and sister are to be in London next Monday, and as soon as he has finished his executorship, I hope, will return to Deal, by the latter end of this month. Adieu, my dear friend. I rejoice in so good an account of your health, and am ever,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

Deal, *September* 16, 1765.

As I was absent when your letter arrived, my dear friend, I did not receive it till my return

return last night. I rejoice to hear so good an account of your health and activity. I so perfectly agree with all you say about heathen temples, that I do not remember any absurdity in taste which so early struck my mind as this. They can have no effect but what is derived merely from the proportions of scale and compass, and it is so impossible for the imagination to be cheated into any such ideas as rendered them striking objects to a Greek or Roman spectator *. I met with no adventures in my trip to Wingham to repay the description of your rambles. I think you will pity the convulsions into which my Gothic spirit was thrown, by taking a survey of the church. It was, before the Reformation, a collegiate church, and the stalls of the canons are still remaining. The walls, windows, and chancels, make a very venerable and Gothic appearance, while the other parts of the building are most absurdly beautified into Roman arches, and Corinthian capitals. There is nothing in Wingham House, except its being a good ha-

* If Mrs. Carter be correct in this opinion, upon what false principles have the most magnificent places in this island been ornamented! And yet what can be objected to the argument as she has stated it? Considered as places of worship, to us the idea is worse than folly; and if viewed in any other light, they have no meaning at all.

bitable mansion; but from one of the windows, the river and the road, discovered through some trees, which seem to have been carelessly planted by the hand of nature, form one of the prettiest immediate views, I ever saw. I went to Wingham on Wednesday, and breakfasted and dined with Lady D'Aeth, in my way. The walk and change of air, had a very sensible effect on my head, and it was amazingly well till Friday afternoon, when a visit, where there were twelve or fourteen people, in a low room, with every door and window shut, heated and confused me to a degree which I have yet scarcely recovered. I am glad this expedition is over; for it has long lain upon my conscience, and, by one means or other, I have been the whole summer prevented from undertaking it sooner. I saw several people whom I was glad to see, but the lounging, loitering kind of life, which one leads in any place, where one does not stay long enough to get into any settled employment, is so wearying to my spirits, that I was impatient to get home again, and, with some difficulty, returned last night. The weather is as delightful as possible, and, if my head behaves itself something better than it has done, for the last three or four months, I shall hope to enjoy this fine season, better than the summer. Though I am usually very well affected

affected to all kinds of weather, I think this is my favorite season. There is something in the serenity of autumnal skies, that soothes and composes my thoughts, and is more pleasing than the bustle and hurry of spring; besides autumn introduces winter, and what reasons I have for a very particular affection to winter, I need not name.

Your friend the Marquis of Carlotte is at Deal Castle with Sir Brook Bridges; but as I have not visited Lady Bridges, I have not seen him.

I am very glad to find that Mrs. Scott's health has not suffered by the distress of her mind. I beg my best compliments to her and Mrs. Cutts. I hope you will not, nor have been under any apprehension at not hearing from me sooner. It was scarcely possible for me to write to-day time enough to save the post after coming from church.

You will soon overtake me in Tacitus, for I did nothing but saunter at Wingham, and while this weather lasts, I propose to read as little, and ramble as much as I find necessary for my health. I have picked up an Italian book which I never heard of before, a History of England, by Gregorio Leti. I have not yet looked into it, but from his Life of Sixtus V. I promise myself an

agreeable entertainment from it, when I have time to read it. Adieu, my dear friend. I am ever,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

Deal, *October* 4, 1765.

I AM very glad to find, my dear friend, that you are not likely to be any considerable loser by the disturbances in the North: and I congratulate you very heartily at the pleasure you must feel from Mr. Montagu's justice and humanity in refusing to join in any oppression of a body of people so useful to society. Every exemption from want and distress at least, is surely the right of those to whose toilsome industry so many are indebted for the accommodation of ease, and the ornaments of affluence.

I proceed but slowly in Davila. The minute description of every battle, and every skirmish, in which neither the head nor heart finds any thing to do, is excessively tiresome. The considering man merely as a *political animal*, is not restrained to Machiavel, but seems to be the general

general principle of every Italian historian I ever read. This is, I suppose, one reason that their characters by appearing only in this single point of view, resembles nothing to be met with in real life. People act, in their general conduct, with regard to the public, conformably to those passions, or those principles which influence them as individuals. Unless, therefore, a reader by some acquaintance with them in this capacity is provided with a key to their actions, any characters in a mere political display, will appear as unnatural and monstrous as Horace's *Humano capiti*, &c. So far as I have read of Davila, he does not appear to be very fair in his account of Catherine de Medicis, on whose conduct he seems to set a very false varnish. On the other hand, he probably greatly aggravates the behaviour of the Hugonot chiefs. Indeed, it is to be feared, that their conduct too often gave occasion to their enemies to represent them in a very bad light. Their cause no doubt was a noble one, but it was too often made a pretence for the gratification of private passions. There is a very essential difference between truth and error, but there is very little difference in the guilt, wherever wrong measures are taken to support either the one or the other.

This is a most complete wintry day, the wind drives

drives the rain upon my paper as I write, and I am obliged to close my shutters. I believe I must be contented to amuse myself with the tempest in my own room, for it is too violent even for my gallant spirit to encounter out of doors, except to see Mrs. Underdown, who is expected to-night. Mrs. Pennington is upon the whole better, and her spirits are much mended by the sea. Your godson I hear is very well, for I have not seen him this age, but often hear of his vivacities. He is so comical, that it is well if he does not carry it too far. Our wedding here, I believe, will be very soon. An old maid is such a mere *hors d'œuvre* at a wedding *, that I rather wish myself out of the way. However I shall display all the ingenuity I have in setting out a breakfast for the company, and by that means, perhaps, may escape the being present at the ceremony. After breakfast we are all to decamp to Mr. Benjamin's.

There has been a very bad fever at Dover, and it has travelled to this place, but I thank God has made but little progress. It is of a singular kind, and does not come to any crisis. One poor man was ill with it above six weeks, and at last died, but I think he is the only instance in which

* That of her youngest brother Henry, who married the daughter of Jonas Benjamin, Esq. of Deal.

it

it has proved fatal. Do you propose to carry your Gothic scheme into execution? But I fear Mr. Adams is an inflexible Grecian.

Adieu, my dear friend, every happiness attend you. I do not wish you more happiness on one day than another, but I particularly remembered the 2d of this month.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Deal, *October* 14, 1765.

I AM more sorry than surprized, my dear friend, to find that equinoctial tempests do not agree with your health so well as summer suns, I hope you will now soon begin to think of changing your climate from the damps of Sandleford to the warm air of Hill-street.

I cannot express how tenderly I feel myself obliged to you for so kindly placing me in the charming spot which your imagination is planning. Old age in such a retreat, and under such circumstances as you describe, is a calm moonlight evening. The objects which give us pleasure will not appear with the same glare and spi-

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rit as in full sunshine, but they will carry an air of greater tranquillity and softness. You cannot think how delightfully I have lost myself in reveries ever since I received your letter; how I have wandered with you along the side of the river, and listened to the cascade while we were resting on the green bank, and the little rock. The delusion, indeed, has sometimes been a little disturbed by the two unlucky epithets *quiet and unnoticed* applied to yourself, which set my imagination a laughing, and made my heart sigh. Paris, Rome, eclat, glitter, admiration, &c. rushed upon my mind, and expelled all the gentle images of philosophic poetrial life, and tranquil friendship. The vale of Tempé vanished from my sight, and what was of infinitely worse consequence to my happiness, in the hurry and turbulence of the great world, I could not find my friend,

> "Again to sleep I close my willing eyes,
> Ye lov'd delusions! dear deceits arise."

Pray what will our poor dear owls do when you have demolished their barns? I hope you will contrive some ivy retreat *a leur intention*. Though Mr. Adam will not allow them a Gothic tower.

Our wedding was celebrated last Thursday. I made

made your kind congratulations to Harry and my new sister, and they both charged me to present their respectful compliments and best thanks. They all breakfasted here, to the number of fourteen, though not one except our own family, and then dined at Mr. Benjamin's. You may imagine that so many hours past in such a company not remarkably silent, was rather a trial to a weak head. I held out till dinner was over, and then stole home, and returned to the solitude and quiet of my own apartment, exceedingly consoled by the reflection that though I was very much tired of a wedding, it was not my own. Not but I entirely agree with you in the most honorable notions of marriage, and think it a very right scheme for every body but myself. My sister Harry is pretty, and her manner very gentle, modest, and engaging. She sings very agreeably, and plays very well on the harpsichord. Her temper seems remarkably composed and sweet *, and I hope there is a fair prospect that she will render poor Harry as happy as un-

* The character of this lady was perfectly just. Both parties have been long since departed to *the house appointed for all living*, after a union of uninterrupted affection, confidence, and happiness. They left four sons, two of them post captains in the navy, one a major in the royal marines, and one a clergyman.

comfortable

comfortable health, and not good spirits, will allow him to be. My heart achs for them both whenever I think on this circumstance, and therefore I think on it as little as may be. All I can do for them is to recommend their happiness to the goodness of Providence.

Mrs. Underdown returned very well, and much the better for her *sejour* at Canterbury, and is always much yours. She has not been in any of our wedding bustles, which her spirits are not able to bear. The whole tribe are to dine with us to-morrow, which I think will conclude any particular fatigue that I shall have in the affair. Not but that I gladly pay the tax of a fit of the head ach, and am very thankful for the blessing of seeing so large a family cheerfully and prosperously assembled together. Adieu, my dearest friend. Pray never write to me when there is the least danger of its hurting your health. The proverb says, one may purchase gold too dearly, and I shall find it verified if your letters cost me your ease.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXIX.

Deal, *October* 28, 1765.

This letter I hope will find you, my dear friend, escaped from the damps and rheumatisms of your Scotch firs, and secured against the blasts of winter in your Chinese abode *. I expect in my next walk to find all the late remaining beauties of the year, swept away by the deluge of the last continued heavy rains. I was lucky enough to enjoy the latest view of this fair autumnal season in a ramble which I made the beginning of last week. The air was soft and exhilarating as the gales of Eden, and the landscape one of the finest I ever beheld. Besides the general desire of being near you, I particularly wished for the honor of Kent, that you had been with me at the time I was enjoying so enchanting a view. I walked to the summit of a high hill, from whence I was suddenly struck by a prospect of the sea in front, bounded only by the sky. There were ships enough to diversify

* One of the drawing rooms in Hill-street, fitted up in that fashion.

the

the uniformity of such a vast expanse, without being so crowded as to hide its magnificence. The whole country round was set with steeples and tufts of trees in every variety of situation. At some distance were the white cliffs of the isle of Thanet, strongly illuminated by the sun, while the nearer object of Deal castle made a most solemn appearance under a dark cloud. There is no description I can give, that will convey any idea equal to the beauty and sublimity of this scene, or of the effect it had on my spirits. I had been very often before on this hill, which is not two miles from the town, but I now approached it by a different path which I had just discovered, and this circumstance formed an appearance entirely new, besides the novelty which a prospect always acquires on being viewed by a partial sunshine. No one, I believe, who has ever strongly felt the effect of this kind of light, can be much inclined to envy those countries which boast the advantage of unclouded skies *. To the inhabitants of regions of uninterrupted sunshine, the prospects which have once been seen, recur for ever the same, while ours appear in a variety of beauty, infinite as

* The late Mr. Gilpin paid particular attention to the effects produced on landscape by the sun and clouds, and exemplified them in many of his views.

the

the caprices of the shifting atmosphere. Thus kindly has the equal goodness of Heaven compensated the inconveniences of irregular seasons, and wavering health, by a larger portion of the pleasures of imagination *. The next morning I got out early enough to see the sun rise with a soft melancholy splendour, which by the time I got home was entirely clouded, and afterwards succeeded by excessive rain, and this and the head ach, has kept me from rambling ever since. I now write from my pillow, but hope to-morrow to get again into the air and walk.

By the death of the Duke of Dorset, I hear it is expected there will be a change made in all the places in the cinque-ports. Sir Thomas Hales is, I am told, already removed.

I could not finish my letter yesterday, and am so hurried to-day that I must conclude, or I shall not be ready to dine at my brother's with the Cosnans, &c. Adieu, my dear friend.

Ever most affectionately, &c.

* Such was the manner in which Mrs. Carter, in conversation as well as in writing, constantly deduced some good moral from the most common occurrence. Found

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

The quotation is somewhat trite, but it is so apposite, that it is hoped it may be forgiven.

LETTER LXXX.

Deal, *November* 3, 1765.

I REJOICE to find, my dear friend, that you have felt no other effect from the late excessive damp weather, than a week's delay of your journey to town, where I hope you are by this time arrived. I congratulate Mrs. Boscawen on your intention of making her happy by a visit. I beg my respectful and affectionate compliments to her.

I am obliged to you for your mention of my application to Mrs. A. P. I had thought of it before, but among other reasons which determine me against it; one is, that she is connected with the Dorset family, and Lord T. Sackville is, I think, at present the Captain of Sandown castle. The apartments were some years ago fitted up, but it is so wretched a situation, that no body has ever inhabited them. It is very possible, that Lord T. may be removed: but it would be by no means decent to apply to any one acquainted with the family to furnish him with a successor: and I have besides other reasons for declining it.

I am too sensible of the mischievous conse-

quence

quence of being obliged so often to keep my bed: but I cannot avoid it. I sometimes struggle out a day's head ach in great pain and inability of doing any thing: but the usual effect of this effort is being obliged to take to my bed the next, and having two bad days instead of one. I do all in my power to correct the evil by air and exercise whenever I am able: and indeed considering how many days there are when I cannot read with any degree of application, it requires some resolution to quit my books when I can. My walks are really a regimen: and I ought to think myself very happy, that they are likewise an amusement, and I feel not the least necessity of crossing the seas to furnish me with more. The varieties of my own country are more than enough to fill up every vacant hour of a life so far advanced as mine. There is one voyage which I must make, perhaps on a stormy sea *, but this, I trust, will convey me to fairer scenes than those which lie behind the Alps, and to a climate which will ensure uninterrupted health to enjoy them. Do not imagine by this, that I am by any means in a hurry to quit my present

* Happily this was not the case; after a long life, with health not worse than such as is described in these Letters, the close of it was embittered by no pains or struggles either of mind or body.

situation,

situation, which perhaps I love but too well. Indeed I should be most wickedly ungrateful for the blessings with which it is attended, if I did not acknowledge that its pleasures very far outbalance its pains *.

The news has this moment brought in an account of the death of the Duke of Cumberland.

Adieu, my dear friend, whether we meet at Venice, or Rome, or not, may we happily meet at last where we shall never part.

Yours most faithfully, &c.

LETTER LXXXI.

Deal, *December* 12, 1765.

It is to be hoped, that the stars and garters, and glitter of an assembly in the evening made you ample amends, my dear friend,

* This was no transient ebullition of a heart "lifted above the ground with cheerful thoughts," but a steady opinion from which Mrs. Carter never varied. How cheering is such an estimate of human life from the lips of wisdom and virtue? How delightful to think that our mortal pilgrimage is enlivened by such pleasures and enjoyments, consistent with the strictest views of religion and futurity!

for

for the hard words and great wig of the doctor in the morning: and yet if the poor man, for whose sake you tolerated such an unentertaining *tête-à-tête*, received any relief in so terrible a danger, the first part of the day would be that on which you would reflect with the greatest pleasure.

After running over the lists of my correspondents, which, to the great comfort of my indolence is not very long, I think from your account it must be Mrs. Honywood, whom you met at the French embassador's, for I know she is sometimes there. I am sorry to hear she looked so pale, but she is scarcely ever well. Before the arrival of an event on which she had fixed her poor soul, she had languished away the health which is so necessary to qualify her to enjoy it*.

The books might come very safely by the machine, but I beg you will not give yourself the trouble of sending them, as I shall not have time to look into them before I leave Deal. I have many bottoms to wind up, and some domestic affairs to settle, which the very precarious state of my worthless head will not suffer me to execute with much dispatch.

I am always happy in hearing that I have the

* The lady here spoken of was the wife of General Honywood.

honor to be remembered by Lady F. Coningsby and Mrs. Trevor, and beg my respects to them whenever you have an opportunity.

Mrs. Underdown is much obliged by your mention of her, and desires her best compliments to you. I was alarmed last week by her having some symptoms of an illness which confined her the greatest part of last winter; but, I thank God, she is greatly better, and I hope it will go off.

I am going to my pillow, so adieu.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXII.

Deal, *December* 19, 1765.

I AM much obliged to you, my dear friend, for expressing to the Hereditary Prince* my sense of the honor of his enquiries. I rejoice to find you are so well, as to be able to go through such a succession of engagements. I am glad Lord Temple's is one of them, as you must feel great pleasure in a family reunion, as well as an agreeable circumstance in the renewing of a

* Of Brunswick, to whom they had been known at Spa.

former

former acquaintance. It would be of very happy consequence, I believe, if all quarrels were entirely restrained to the principals, and not suffered to interrupt the commerce of the friends on either side, who, by that means, would have continual opportunities of interposing their good offices, to shorten the disagreement.

I subscribe to the truth of your general position, and should heartily wish to see it verified in the present case, if I was enough acquainted with the lady to be assured, that such an event would not, with all its apparent advantages, render her very wretched. It is certainly, as you say, the greatest joy of a delicate mind to communicate happiness: but proportionably grievous must be the disappointment of finding all its endeavours for that purpose ineffectual, which must ever be the case, where the subject is unhappy, not from external circumstances, but from constitution. The disappointment of this wish, from other causes, though it must be severely felt, will be more easily supported by a generous mind, from the consideration that the pain it suffers is merely selfish; and that the person whom it vainly wishes to render happy by its own power, may, however, be rendered happy by something else.

I am much obliged to you for your kind solicitude about my *embonpoint*, which, I believe, is

pretty much in *statu quo*. Mrs. Primrose and Mrs. Underdown fancy I am fallen away, but indeed it is a mere fancy, though possibly it might be so some months ago, during a very active pain in my stomach, but that has long been quite well; and lying so frequently in bed with the head-ach is not likely to make one grow thin. I cannot indeed give any positive testimony how I look; for, though I very narrowly inspect my face every day, it is just as I should a saucer, which I was wiping, merely to see if it was clean, without any kind of animadversion on the colours or the pattern. In short, I believe, it is very probable, that, except being so many months older, you will find me in all respects pretty much as you left me, only perhaps that I am not quite so fond of talking as I used to be.

I sensibly feel your expressing a pleasure at the approach of January. I remember, about a hundred years ago, when I was very young, my brother and I used to allot a week before hand to talk of the joy we expected at Deal Fair. With pretty much the same kind of infantine delight, I now think every year on my coming to London. Thus, through the whole of life, remains one's inclination for a fair, and varies only in the choice of the playthings. I flatter myself, however, that, as the society of a most valuable set of friends is

my principal object in town, I do not run after such a mere vanity fair, as if my imagination gaped after nothing more than the baubles and rattles of the world. Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours, &c.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Deal, *December* 25, 1765.

I HAD begun a letter to you, my dear friend, last week, but my head prevented me from going on, and has kept me on a pillow for the greatest part of the last forty-eight hours. It is not at all disposed for writing to-day, but I was afraid you would think me ill, if I deferred it till my head was in better humour.

As I think it no dishonour to any character, that the clearest discernment should sometimes be the dupe of good nature, I will neither join with you in your laugh at yourself for a past mistake, nor pronounce that there will not be some future occasion for me to obey your commands of reminding you of your golden saying. It is, no doubt, a very useful lesson of caution and suspense; but surely ought not to preclude all enquiry,

quiry, and give an absolute determination to the judgment. The history of every age affords too many instances to prove that the world is often *et fou et injuste*, and one should become both by following its decision. Time, indeed, seldom fails to reverse the sentence of popular injustice, but it is not usually till the injured sufferer has felt the last effects of its malice *. Socrates had, for many years, lain under the infamy of being an atheist, a seducer, and a rebel to the laws; and it was not till after they had administered the hemlock potion, that the infatuated Athenians discovered him to be, what a long life had not taught them, the friend of God, of virtue, and his country; and that the character belonged to his accusers which they had mistaken for his.

I hope this abatement of severe weather will be a favorable circumstance for my Lord Lyttelton's cold, and prevent its ending in a fever.

I am greatly obliged to Dr. Gregory † and Mr.

* "—— Invidiam supremo fine domari." Hor.

† Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh, for the present of his "Father's Legacy to his Daughters." He was father of the present eminent physician of that name; of the lady of the Rev. A. Alison, author of two volumes of Sermons of the highest-rate excellence, and of other approved works; and of the late Rev. William Gregory of Canterbury, the Editor's much esteemed and deeply regretted friend. Mrs. Alison passed all the early part of her life with Mrs. Montagu.

Harris,

Harris *, for the honor of their present. Mr. Douglas is gone to town for a few days, and designs to wait on you; and he has promised to convey the books to me. If you should not happen to be at home, he will leave a direction where he lodges; and, if it is not at too great a distance, I beg the favor of you to let them be sent to him.

It is not in my power to leave Deal before my usual time. I shall stay about a week at Lambeth, in my way to Clarges-street, where I hope to be rather before the middle of January. I have breathed this air for so many months, that I please myself with hoping that my head will, for some time, at least, feel an amendment from changing it.

Mr. Boyd is extremely well pleased with Miss Chapone's management of his family, and finds it exceeds every thing he had expected. One would imagine this should have produced some mention, at least, of rendering her situation easy: but there has not past a word relating to this subject. Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours, &c.

* Mr. Harris, father to the late Earl of Malmsbury, who was so obliging as to make Mrs. Carter a present of his works.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Lambeth, *May* 24, 1766.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear friend, for giving me the pleasure of hearing you were arrived so far prosperously on your journey. Indeed, I wanted such a cordial to raise my spirits, which were extremely low at the thought of being separated from you by so many hundred miles: and yet Newcastle is not so remote as Rome. If I was wise, I should consider this journey as a preparation for the other, and make use of it to accommodate myself to the thought of habitually living without you. But unfortunately I am not wise; nor do I see any prospect of accommodating myself to any such thing. My reason is, I believe, a tolerable philosopher, but I have had many a woeful experience how all its fine declamations have been thrown away upon my heart.

I called on Mrs. Scott to day, and found her very well for such health as hers. She gave me intelligence of your letter, which the wicked delay of the penny-post prevented my receiving till after my return. We were to have gone to Mrs. Scott's yesterday, the coach was ordered, and stood

stood basking two hours in the sun without the possibility of our getting into it, from a succession of visitors, so that, at last, it was not practicable to get any further than Whitehall. It is a lamentable circumstance of this place to be so at the mercy of every little interruption; so, in the spirit of independance, I sat out this morning on my two feet, and Mrs. Talbot appointed to pick me up in her way home. It grieves me every hour to see Miss Talbot with such talents, and such virtues, worn down by so many little teazing affections, to objects which seem so far below the powers of her mind. But, perhaps, this is one of the idle prejudices of human folly. Nothing is great or little, but with a reference to the principle of action. Her employments arise from her situation; and, I believe, one of the noblest efforts of magnanimity is submitting great talents to what pride would represent as trifling objects, from considerations of duty. I came hither on Wednesday, and propose to stay till the Archbishop returns from his visitation, which will be in less than three weeks. I shall then be heartily glad to get home, and be fixed into my own quiet system for the remainder of the year. One's time is broken into such fragments by the unavoidable method of living here, that I find any application impossible, and if I did not please myself

myself with the hope that I am of some little use in amusing the present solicitude of my friends, I should find such a loitering kind of life very tiresome. But, while I am of any use to them, I am doing something which I am sure I ought to do.

I hope you slept as soundly as you promised to do when you wrote, and that whether you dreamed of me or not, you will have as many waking reveries about me as you can. This is an article in which I have no apprehension of dying in your debt. I never wish you to exceed, alas, you have too great a love of *things* ever to equal the affection with which I am, my dearest friend,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

Lambeth, *May* 31, 1766.

By this time, my dear friend, I hope you have perfectly recovered the fatigue of your journey. Mrs. Scott gave me the pleasure of knowing that you were happily arrived at the end of it. She showed me the letter in which you were so good to give me a share. I hope soon to hear that you are free from the *embarras*

of

of a new establishment, and that the success of Mr. Montagu's affairs in the North is likely to repay you for a summer of days without warm sunshine, and evenings without society.

I have for some time feared, from Madame de Blum's very long silence, that there was some melancholy alteration in her health. I had only waited till my return to Deal for a convenient opportunity of making some enquiry after her; but all enquiry is now unnecessary, for I yesterday received an account of her death from Monsieur de Blum, *le fils*. He gives me a particular and very affecting description of her last illness, which was a state of the extremest suffering for more than two months, and which she supported with the utmost degree of patience and resignation. The physicians were apprehensive that she might endure this terrible trial a longer time; but, God be thanked, she was released sooner than they expected. Amidst all the violence of most severe pains, her understanding remained unclouded to the last moment when she expired, in an act of devotion, without one convulsive struggle. The poor young man writes in the deepest affliction; speaks of her character, in general, in the highest terms; and expresses the utmost gratitude of his own particular obligations to her, for the care she had taken in forming his

principles, and the constant resource he found in her affection and friendship. Very highly to his honor, it appears, by his letter, that he tried every method of alleviating her sufferings; and, during the whole time of her illness, he attended her so constantly, as scarcely ever to quit her chamber day or night. He desires me to let you know of Madame de Blum's death, and to present his respectful compliments to you.

Mrs. Scott and Miss Arnold drank tea here one day last week: I met William Boscawen yesterday, who gave me but an indifferent account of his mother's health. She has had the rheumatism very badly, but is something better. I did not know of her being in town; but will call on her as soon as I can. Lady Edgecumbe was here last night, and told me that the young Duchess of B. has dined with the Dowager, and that she is to figure in her Grace's jewels on the birthday. I was heartily glad to hear of their being on such comfortable terms. The Duke of Grafton, since his resignation, has made a speech in the House of Lords, explaining the reason of it: that it was not, as it had been represented, from any dislike to business, but from a persuasion that there was only one person capable of extricating the nation from its difficulties: that, whenever that person should be in office, he would be very

very willing to serve either with or under him: *au reste*, his Grace expressed great esteem for many of the present ministry. But, perhaps, I am telling you what you may hear much better from other accounts.

Mrs. and Miss Bowes were here yesterday, and exprest great pleasure in your being in their neighbourhood.

I hope I shall hear from you before I leave Lambeth. The Archbishop is to return about the 9th or 10th of June; and I propose to set out for Deal, two or, at farthest, three days after. Adieu, my dear friend.

I had just finished my letter when yours arrived, which gave me the joy of knowing that you had tolerably well recovered the fatigue of your journey, and found no worse effect from it than fatigue. An aching-head makes me, at this minute, very sensibly feel the inconvenience of your situation. But, by this time, I hope, the noise of the hammer is quietly reposing itself in your baize door, and leaves you unmolested. It is easier to exclude a disagreeable object from the eyes than the ears *, so, I think, the prospect a less grievance. The imagination finds much less

* This is contrary, however, to the Latin Poet's opinion:

"Sequius irritant animos transmissa per auses,
Quam quæ sunt oculis submissa fidelibus."

oppo-

opposition from the one sense, in transforming the rude elements of wealth in a coal mine, into the blessings of beneficence, and the beauties of art, than it would from the other, if it attempted to convert the noise of half a dozen hammers into an oratorio.

There is nothing in your description of York-Minster which interests me, but your wishing that I had been your companion there. Indeed you owed me such a recompence for annihilating all my curiosity to see it, which was before so very lively. I always consider the sublime as the characteristic of Gothic architecture, and every attempt at elegance and beauty as mere foppery, as unsuitable as childish ornaments on a gigantic bulk *.

Mrs. and Miss Talbot desire their compliments to you; once more, my dear friend, adieu.

* Mrs. Carter afterwards saw York Minster, and was disappointed. She thought it too wide in proportion to its length, as a Gothic building; and upon the whole preferred Canterbury Cathedral to it.

LETTER LXXXVI.

Deal, *June* 29, 1766.

I AM heartily glad, my dear friend, that you had health enough to carry you through the *ennui* of a race-week, which, however, must have been the less grievance, as, by your account of yourself, you have not at present the vigor of health that gives spirit to solitude. There is a kind of middle state in which one is neither well enough to bear intense application, nor ill enough to need the indulgence of absolute repose; and, in that case, a jumble of mixed company, where a more select society is not to be had, is the most supportable: pleasant, I should think, it never could be, except by the reflection that it is in some situations proper, as it is in yours to avoid any appearance of contempt of those among whom you are at present obliged to reside.

To consider human creatures as acting merely by their natural propensities, unrestrained by any thing, but external forms and arbitrary rules of behaviour, I think, it may be questioned whether persons in high rank (taking your sense of the expression) are so much better than the vulgar as

you

you suppose. Are your swinish Northumbrians, who stuff four solid meals, and guzzle four quarts of ale in a day, more brutal in their pleasures than the set of fine gentlemen who kissed the greasy cook for making a soup to their epicurean taste*! Does the man of genius, and literature, and polite address, rise above brutal pleasure more than the roaring, ill-bred squire, when both equally sacrifice to mere appetite, the innocence and peace of some poor credulous unhappy girl! The fox and hyena are just as much brutes as the bear and the lion; and are more hateful in proportion as their mischief is more disguised. The greatest difference between the several classes, seems to arise in cases where a right principle is equally the guide; and here the superiority will bear a proportion to the advantages of intellectual improvement and external circumstances, and the character which is placed in so favorable a situation, will be adorned with that refinement which is the highest proof of internal dignity. It arises from the perpetual effort of a noble mind struggling against human infirmity, and endeavouring, as far as possible, to purify every virtue from that mixture of imperfection, which it re-

* The Editor is unable to throw any light upon this amusing anecdote in the records of epicurism.

ceives

ceives from folly and from passion, and to polish it into the highest beauty and grace *.

I was sorry to find you were disappointed of your excursion, which would have been so agreeable a relaxation to the fatigues of business, and the dull engagements of uninteresting society. We have had the same unsummerlike weather here as it is with you.

I hope Mrs. Scott was well when you heard from her. Sir G. Ellison † is in high reputation among our reading people here. My nephew, Montagu, is well; but I believe I am at present in very bad odour with him, as he is violently affronted that I did not bring him a book from London, as well as his brothers, which mightily hurts his dignity, though the monkey can as yet only spell. I know not whether I told you in my last that the Archbishop has been so good as to give Mr. Pennington a living; what he must

* Mrs. Carter's position seems undeniably true. Where conduct is influenced by the same undeviating religious principle, the only difference can be in manners, not in the degree of virtue. But she was very far removed from the vulgar notion, that virtue and religion are confined to the middle class of society, and that the higher ranks are universally plunged in dissipation and profligacy. Her own experience, as well as good sense, led her to form a very contrary opinion.

† A novel, by Mrs. Scott.

quit for it here, will prevent its increasing his income, except in a small degree; but it is an establishment, and he and my sister are very happy in it, and consequently so am I, as it was what they had set their hearts on. The finishing this affair has been delayed by the difficulty of getting a chaplainship, for which many fruitless attempts have been made. It seems if he could have succeeded, it must have been at the expence of ten or twenty guineas. Would one, in speculation, conceive that persons of noble birth, high rank, and liberal education, should be so contemptibly dirty! However, I hope, Mr. P. will obtain a chaplainship from one who does not drive a trade by selling it *. I should have tried the interest of some of my friends, if I had been in town, but, in the general dispersion, it is difficult to get at any body.

Indeed, I had not the least idea of being angry at your wishing yourself at Almack's or Soho, for it certainly is not to me, that you or any one else is accountable for any degree of time or attention which they think proper to bestow on

* The censure here conveyed must certainly be just, if the disgraceful practice alluded to does, or ever did, exist. Mrs. Carter's brother-in-law, did, as she hoped he would, receive a chaplainship from a Prelate, equally distinguished by his rank, piety, talents, and learning—Archbishop Secker.

such

such assemblies. Forgive me, my dear friend, if the tenderest concern for your virtue and happiness, joined to a persuasion, that such superior talents and advantages, demanded a most watchful attention to every step you take, tempted me just to offer it as a subject for your consideration, how far your very frequent appearance might be right, in mixed assemblies, and your example an encouragement to the general dissipation of the world. But my judgment of the mischievous effects of this kind of life, may very probably be wrong, and beyond a hint I very seldom proceed. I have too much business in endeavouring to correct my own wrong dispositions, and to reform the faults and follies, which I feel rising every hour, to allow me to indulge the vanity of thinking I have any right to dictate to others, and least of all to those who have distinguished powers of judging for themselves *.

I believe you will find it difficult to make out this scrawl, as I have been let blood in the midst of it, but was willing to finish it, as I was pre-

* How justly does our excellent Liturgy include in the same deprecation, " the world, the flesh, and the devil!" How difficult does it appear to be for those who live in the world to *keep themselves unspotted from it*, though, like the distinguished character to whom these Letters were addressed, they escape the pollutions of the flesh and the devil!

vented by company, which dined with us, from writing yesterday. The heat of the room has given me the head-ach, so that I must retire to my pillow, when I have subscribed myself,

My dear friend, &c.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Deal, *July* 12, 1766.

I AM greatly obliged to you, my dear friend, for so kindly interesting yourself, about Mr. Pennington's scarf; but I meant to have told you, whether I did or not, that he had got one, from the Archbishop. It was not convenient to his Grace, but he was so good to do it, rather than Mr. Pennington should buy a chaplainship, after he had in vain tried to get one any other way. As improbable as it is, that any right honorable personage should be so very little, it is an undoubted fact; the price is from twelve to sixteen or twenty guineas. The practice, I hope and believe, is far from being universal, but it certainly is too common. After all, it is no great subject of wonder when one considers the lives of many people of high rank. Luxury and extra-

extravagance must ever be rapacious and dirty. It is certainly not more scandalous for a nobleman to sell his privileges, than to cheat his tradesmen, by running in debt, and it is less unjust.

I rejoice to hear your health is upon the whole so well; God grant it may continue so, particularly while you are at such a distance from your friends, and surrounded by such a neighbourhood as you describe. I am glad that you spend so much time in your post-chaise. In tolerable health, the mere views of nature, and the mechanical effect of air and sunshine, will raise a spirit of cheerfulness, and soothe the mind into a composure of thought, which, for some time, at least, will, in good degree, compensate the want of agreeable society. I heartily congratulate you both on the power and the inclination of bestowing the means of health and subsistence to wretchedness and want. You have certainly good reason to console yourself in your present situation, for the absence of some pleasures *which perish in the using*, while you can procure such as immediately receive the stamp of eternity.

You are very good to take me sometimes with you in your post-chaise; you would be much in the right, however, to turn me out into the middle of the road, if your imagination did not render

render me a more agreeable companion than I should be in reality, if I was with you at present. Having a slight fever, my maid, between soothing, and, as far as she decently could, chiding, has just been lavishing a world of eloquence to persuade me to have a doctor, but I believe, by mere patience, it will go off, in a few days, of itself. Indeed, I am quite weary of the inefficacy of medicines. My father and my aunt are gone to my brother's, where I was not well enough to accompany them, and I hope to grow the better, by sitting in absolute solitude and silence; for it is extremely painful for me to speak, and if any body was with me, I should not think myself at liberty to be silent.

You wonder how you have acquired so little knowledge; and I believe every body else must wonder, that so interrupted by the avocations of the world, you should have acquired so much more than most recluse students would have gained by years of unremitting labour in a solitary cell. Extensive as your knowledge is, however, I know not whether it might not have been still more so, if it had cost you more pains. People are always mighty apt to defer what they feel they have a power of effecting whenever they please, just as people of slow animal motions, are, I believe, generally more apt to be

ready

ready for any appointment, than the lively and quick.

I had a letter last night, from our Sylph, who laments not having heard from you. She is ordered to bathe, and as she never does any thing in a plain, practical, vulgar way, her imagination is raising an American hut on the banks of the Liffey.

I know not whether I told you, that since I came home, I had read all the Prefaces prefixed to Johnson's Shakespear, and that, with all the abuse against him, not one of them appeared to me, in point of composition, in any degree equal to his own. I do not, by any means, intend by this to express that I think he is always right in what he says of his author. In this article, he, like the rest of the commentators, appears to be very defective, and consequently "*res integra tibi reservatur*" if you pursue your scheme. Pray did you carry Mr. Harris's works into Northumberland with you? If you did, I will refer you to a page which gives a turn to a passage in Aristotle about tragedy, at which I think you will be surprized; at least I was, when I read it. But as at this present writing, I understand neither Greek, nor Aristotle, nor Mr. Harris, nor myself, I will not venture to say any thing more about any of them.

I con-

I congratulate you on the near prospect of being repaid for all the expence and trouble of your coal-mine, may you meet with the fullest success, and every other means of happiness. I am,

My dear friend, &c.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Deal, *August* 14, 1766.

I WILL thank you, my dear friend, for your letter on this side the Tweed, *en attendant* that which you give me hopes of receiving from the other. I am glad you have undertaken an excursion which will give some variety to the uniform life which you have hitherto had this summer. You would, I am persuaded find a sufficient relief merely from the free exercise of your own ideas which have so long been suffocated by the vapours of a coal-mine, even if you were to meet with no external object of curiosity; but probably you will meet with many. I congratulate you, on the view of a new country, as of all objects, natural scenes most strongly affect the imagination. Next to these, Holyrood Abbey will,

will, I think, be your most enviable spectacle. As to Glasgow, it being a mere handsome modern-built town, tolerably well furnished with the conveniences of life, I think you are not likely to be much edified by what you will meet with there. For though the conveniences of life are mighty good things to feel, they make no great figure in the eye of a traveller. It is pity that your time is so limited as not to allow you to ascend the heights of windy Morven, and trace the antiquities of Ossian. But the solid concerns of a coal-mine, are a grievous dead-weight on the flights of fancy.

I am obliged to you for your political intelligence. I had heard something of the *brouillerie* among the great men, but with less exactness than you relate it. Many are the advantages of unambitious life; among the rest, it is surely very happy to be placed in a situation where private friendship is in no danger of being sacrificed to public measures, or public utility to private attachments. I am very sorry to find that Lord L.* is excluded from that share in the administration to which his abilities and his probity give him so just a title. But whether the present arrangement is, in all respects, what might be wished or

* Probably Lyttelton.

no,

no, it is to be hoped things are at last settled; for, surely, the shifting and uncertain state of our councils, for some time past, must have been of most mischievous consequence to the national affairs.

But, leaving the affairs of the nation to those unlucky people who are to answer for them, I have a piece of private history to relate, which you will be glad to hear. Miss Chapone either is, or shortly will be, Mrs. Boyd. She commissioned me to inform you of this event, several days ago, but your Edinburgh expedition prevented my writing, and probably your first information may be from the newspapers. Mr. Boyd's mother appears very well satisfied with his choice, and Lady Camden has writ a very obliging letter to Miss Chapone on the occasion.

I have been for some days in expectation of receiving a letter from you out of Scotland, but it is not yet arrived. It seems quite an age since I have heard any thing of you; but people who remain fixt to a spot, are apt to measure time by a very different standard from that which governs the motions of their friends, who are hurrying through a variety of new objects. If you kept to your intention of staying only a week, you must by this time, be on your road to Denton;

so if I do not hear from you to-night, I will dispatch my letter to-morrow.

I have this moment heard that Mr. Boyd was married yesterday; *Quod bene vertat.* No letter from you to-night; so I live in hopes that the next I have from you, will bring an account that you are returned safe and well, and not too much fatigued by your excursion. Adieu, my dear friend. I am,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Deal, *September* 1, 1766.

I HAVE been, for some days, my dear friend, in expectation of hearing that you were safely and well returned to Denton. At least, I think you will be got thither by the time this letter will reach you, and I am unwilling to delay any longer the sending you the enclosed from Mrs. Vesey, which I detained one post, in the hope of hearing from you. I writ to you about a fortnight ago, and directed my letter to Denton; soon after that, I had the favor of yours, which was dated on your way to Glasgow.

I re-

I rejoiced to hear that your health was improved, and that you had received so much amusement from your travels. I agree with you, that reason and humanity would rejoice to see a country emerging from barbarism into civilization and culture. But yet the spots where the "lone majesty of untamed nature" still appears in its wildest grandeur, must be most striking and amusing to the imagination. I have, in some degree, accompanied your travels; as, in my two or three last fits of the head-ach, I have been amusing myself with reading Ossian.

I was extremely sorry to read in the papers, a melancholy article from Frescati. I fear this news will have thrown a cloud over the pleasure which you have received by your late amusing excursion. The disappointment of expectations raised by the early lustre of such a character, is a loss to the world in general; but what, alas! is this kind of disappointment, compared with the private sorrow of poor Lady Margaret Macdonald*.

I hope Mr. Montagu has no concern in the terrible explosion which has happened in one of

* Mother to Sir James Macdonald, to whom this article relates. Few young men have been more regretted, as there have been very few of whom higher expectations have been formed.

the

the collieries near Durham. The dreadful destruction of so many poor creatures, is very affecting without any particular connection; but it would, I know, be still more distressful to you, if it had happened in any part of your own territories.

Mrs. Vesey does not tell me a word about coming to England; and I am told it is not so certain a point, as we had hoped it was; yet I am, notwithstanding, strongly persuaded, that we shall have the pleasure of seeing her.

I long to know where you are, and how you do, and hope you will soon give me some information where my thoughts may look for you. I am,

My dear friend, &c.

LETTER XC.

Deal, *September* 5, 1766.

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dear friend; in the first place, for giving me the pleasure of knowing you were safely returned to Denton,

Denton, and your health so much improved by your tour; and, in the next, for the account which you are so good to give me of your travels.

I honor Lord and Lady Northumberland for preserving the Gothic grandeur of Alnwick Castle, undiminished by the fopperies of modern prettiness.—I can easily guess how you must have been struck with the view of harvest on the edge of the sea, from the effect such a prospect has on my own mind, even with the opportunity of seeing it every day, on this naturally wild, rocky, and unfruitful coast; which is the more striking from an intermixture of some spots which retain the original savage air. I do not at all envy your lodging in a *flatt* at Edinburgh. A high hill, where one is solidly fixed, and surrounded by the free air of heaven, is a good station; but the being suspended between earth and sky, as if one belonged to neither, and enclosed in walls of brick and stone, appears to me a most fearful *sejour*; and I should imagine myself like the "Old woman drawn up in a basket, three or four leagues as high as the moon."

If one had no other proof of the Scotch hospitality than the attention which was every where bestowed on your accommodation and amusement,

ment, the argument would be far from general; however, much to their honor, it is the national character. I am glad you were so well entertained by the conversation parties at Edinburgh. But though I have all imaginable honor for your *philosophes et beaux esprits*, yet, as they are mere men and women of flesh and blood, and such as, in some degree or other, one may meet in all quarters of the earth, I am much more inclined to envy your view of the relicks of the Caledonian monarchs. Indeed, the solemn antiquities of Holyrood House, have long been an object of curiosity to me, and I have harassed all my Scotch acquaintance with questions on that subject. None of them ever told me so much as you have done; and probably, from that carelessness with which people overlook what is every day in their power to see, none of them might know so much of it as you do. I am much obliged to you for Sir Gilbert Elliot's verses, which are indeed very fine. I will observe your charge about them, though I am sorry to keep such an entertainment entirely to myself. I have not seen the Sermons for Young Women *, but design to get them, when I go to London, as I hear a very good character of them, which is

* Fordyce's.

confirmed

confirmed by the way in which you mention them.

I know nothing particular of my nephew Montagu, as he is now quite out of my reach: when I last heard from Mrs. Pennington, the children were all, I thank God, very well. I should have been very happy to have heard as good an account of herself.

I fancy you may have my book at any of the booksellers, however certainly at Mr. Rivington's.

Mrs. Boyd, I am persuaded, will be very happy in receiving your congratulations. I have seen but little of her, or indeed of any body else, as for the greatest part of the summer I have been in a state of health which has rendered company so painful and fatiguing to me, that I have kept myself as silent and quiet as possible.

The society of Edinburgh did me great honour, as I am persuaded they considered their toasting me as a compliment to you.

I sent you my condolence on the death of Sir James Macdonald when I last wrote. I find we both agree in having poor Lady Margaret first in our thoughts on this melancholy occasion. Her loss is sure and determinate: the public loses only expectations. Great as were the talents of this extraordinary young man, and fair

as were the promises of his opening character, none but He who looks through all the possible events of every stage of our existence, can tell how far the pestilential air of the world might have blasted all those early hopes of distinguished merit. But the feelings of a parent for the loss of a dutiful and affectionate child, do not depend on contingences, nor can be stifled by that variety of other objects which successively engage the attention of the public eye.

I will deliver your kind compliments to Mrs. Underdown; she has been sadly harassed lately by her fears for Mrs. Primrose, who has had a feverish disorder which for some time made her very ill; but I hope is now pretty well subdued.

I shall be very glad to accompany you in your progress through the Highlands, whenever you are at leisure to give me that pleasure.

I am, my dear friend, &c.

LETTER XCI.

Deal, *November* 12, 1766.

I SHOULD have thanked you sooner for your letter, my dear friend, but I really could not get a leisure half hour all day yesterday, as we were to have about fifteen people to dinner, and among the rest Mrs. Pennington, whom I have not seen before she left this country, and who can make but a very short stay with us, as she left poor Montagu ill with an ague, the second which he has had since their being at Tunstal. I attempted to write yesterday while Mrs. P. was out, but my head was so very bad by the heat and din of Monday, that I was obliged to convey it to a pillow. The Penningtons have just left us, and I am determined not to lose the post to-day, for the same reason which kindly occasioned your not deferring your letter to me.

I heartily congratulate you on the prosperous state of your colliery. If its success had no better end than merely to make you richer, it would be scarcely worth the fatigues which it has cost you, and the money might be just as well under the earth, as on its surface; but you have such

powers of applying it in a manner to make you happier, that I hope it will amply repay you for all the pains which you have bestowed to acquire it. I am sorry there is so much reason against your having an entire confidence in ———. It is unpleasant to have transactions with people on whose dishonesty or imprudence it is necessary to keep a constant guard. Imprudence indeed is too soft an expression for the conduct of people whose extravagance runs them in debt; and an indulgence of mere vanity, at the hazard of the property of others, is more mischievous to society than robbing on the highway.

I am extremely glad to find that our Sylph has confirmed the hope of her coming to England. I am told they have lent their house to somebody or other. If these interlopers do not evacuate the dwelling before we come to town, I think it will be an admirable expedient to send my gentlewoman in Clarges-street with a torch and a broom to eject them. With such an apparatus, she would be the very spectre that raised such a dust about poor Dion *.

Several

* This is mentioned in Plutarch's Life of Dion. A short time before his death, and while Callippus was conspiring against him, as Dion was sitting alone in a gallery in his own house, before the close of day, he suddenly heard a great

 noise,

Several others besides Mrs. Best have been inoculated in this country. Among the rest Lady Twysden, who, it is said, is above threescore, and rode about in her chariot as if nothing had ailed her; and indeed I do not find any thing does ail the people under Mr. Sutton's care, as soon as the distemper appears, and but little before. Yet in your state of health I should have a thousand terrors. But this point, if you have really any thought about it, we will discuss when we meet. Adieu, my dear friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER XCII.

Deal, *December* 11, 1766.

I REJOICE, my dear friend, that your disorder is so well gone off, and hope the air and

noise, and saw at the end of the room a gigantic woman, like one of the furies as exhibited on the Grecian theatres, sweeping the house with a broom. He was so terrified that he sent for his friends, and requested them to stay with him all night, but the spectre appeared no more. However, his son soon threw himself out of a window, and died; he himself was murdered, and his wife and sister put into prison; so that the house was swept clean from its inhabitants.

exercise

exercise of a journey, which you have the means of making as moderate as you please, will remove any remaining languor from your last attack. Mrs. Scott told me that you found the hurry in which you travelled from London had been hurtful to your health. I hope you will avoid the same precipitation in your return. Happily indeed the shortness of the days, and the absence of the moon, will scarcely allow you to drive such immoderately long stages.

I know not in what blundering way I expressed myself, to make you think I proposed to be in town before Christmas, which I certainly never did propose. I hope to be there pretty soon in January, if I do not pass some days at Lambeth in my way. This I shall not do, unless Miss Talbot particularly chuses that I should, as the state of my health renders it very uncomfortable to me to think of being any where but at home. I have no disorders, I thank God, but what may be supported very quietly and cheerfully in solitude and silence, but they become grievous whenever they give trouble, and interfere with my engagements to others, or oblige an aching head to an exertion which is inexpressibly painful to myself.

Mr. Hume does not seem intitled to much compassion from the attacks of scribblers, which he has

has incurred by scribbling himself, as his part in the dispute seems as little to his honour as that of his antagonist. Such kinds of public controversy between people who have called themselves friends, appear to me of most pernicious tendency, and, if a usual practice, would so weaken all confidence between human creatures, that people would think they acted wisely in shutting themselves up in their separate holes, and avoiding all such intimate connections as would, upon any disagreement, expose them to have all their transactions, and all their faults and weaknesses, published in full glare to the world. If one party is in any remarkably unreasonable degree in the wrong, it must usually proceed from such a disposition of character, that the other will stand in good measure acquitted to the world, without attempting a vindication by the wretched meanness, to say no worse, of publishing transactions and conversations which passed in the unguarded hours of mutual confidence. At all events, if people have been so unfortunate as to make a wrong choice, they ought to submit silently to the consequences of their own imprudence, for few are so much deceived by others, as by the false representations which their own prejudices and affections impose on themselves.

The

The savage * and capricious turn of Rousseau's mind was too strongly marked for any impartial observer to be so far mistaken as to think he could be a friend. None can be truly such, but upon the basis of those eternal principles which form a friendship between the human mind and that supreme object to which its first attention is due, and from which it derives the only sure foundation, on which all the subordinate relations can be formed with safety, and supported with honour.

I hear the great world is in a fearful bustle, and as unsettled as ever. In such case it is a great comfort to think that one belongs to the little: not but the little world has its agitations too †.

Adieu,

* The word *savage*, as here applied to Rousseau, does not mean brutal; but marks very powerfully that freedom from all religious and moral restraint, which was so striking a feature of his character. The consequence of this was, that he had no steady fixed principle, and as he continually acted from motives of passion only, neither man nor woman could rely upon his attachment from one minute to another. That which makes his writings so dangerous to young persons is, that he is perpetually talking of virtue, and practising vice; that he represents his character and principles as pure, while his conduct was degraded by brutal sensuality, and hard-hearted licentiousness.

† Yet these seem to have been of little interruption to her happiness, if we may judge by the attachment which

Mrs.

Adieu, my dear friend. I hope your next letter will give me the pleasure of a certain account when you propose to get nearer within the reach of

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER XCIII.

Deal, *December* 27, 1766.

A PROSPEROUS journey to my dear friend, and a happy meeting to us both. I am extremely glad to find you propose travelling in the spirit of moderation, and in such a way, I hope, it may rather do you good than hurt, and remove your head-ach, which being a mere impertinent intruder among the other riff-raff attendants of a coal-mine, I hope may easily be shuffled off, and left behind you. Mine being a yoke-fellow for better for worse, will probably accompany me

Mrs. Carter always shows to the middle rank of life, which she thought the least exposed to temptation, as well as to the casualties of human affairs. She always dwelt with peculiar delight on the "*Secretum iter, et fallentis semitu vitæ*," as being that which led to a happy futurity, by an easy path over the plains of life, rather than being alternately exalted on its mountains, or sunk in the gloom of its valleys.

till

till death us do part. I do not see this is any reason why others should be troubled with it; but yet as Miss Talbot does not take cordially to my scheme of not stopping at Lambeth in my way, I propose to spend a few days there, but hope to be certainly in Clarges-street on the 12th of January. Mrs. Douglas, I believe, will come to town with me, as she proposes to take that opportunity of paying a visit to Mr. Vere. The being chiefly confined to the fire-side for some weeks, makes the thought even of so short a journey rather formidable to me, but if my head grows more tolerable, I will get into the air next week, and harden myself for the week following.

I am glad to find my opinion of the controversy, and of all such controversies, confirmed by your's. Besides the other circumstances which we agree so perfectly in disapproving, is there not something very indecent, that a character which ought to be treated with the utmost respect, should be made a kind of party in this contemptible squabble, and introduced with as little ceremony as the most common name, on an occasion too, and with circumstances, which many people will think far from being very honorable. That R.* should

* Rousseau.

find

find a shelter in Great Britain from the persecution raised against him for the wild notions of an extravagant head, and be entitled to the common protection of the laws, all moderate and sober people would think very right; that under any real necessity his wants should be supplied, all of a truly christian temper would wish; but that he should be recommended as a subject for the r——l favor, when one considers him as the author of a book, which by the testimony even of its greatest admirers, is allowed the most calculated for the corruption of manners of any of the kind, perhaps, that ever was writ, seems very marvellous; and there was plainly an apprehension that for some reason or other it would be generally thought so, by the concealment which was stipulated, and which is now divulged, so much to the honour of all the parties concerned.

I fancy our Sylph has not yet left the coral groves and sub-marine palaces at which she would meet with so many of her fellow-nymphs in her way to England. I think if she had been landed, either from herself, or somebody else who knows her consequence to us, we should have had some information about it. The weather is now very moderate, and I hope she will not lose the opportunity.

Mrs.

Mrs. Underdown is much your's, and as hearty in her wishes for my setting out as you can suppose. This I believe would be the case if she was to see me every day; but indeed for some time, by one means or other, she has seen so little of me, that it is pretty much the same thing whether I am at Deal, or in Clarges-street.

You will probably see by the newspapers that Lady Guildford died last week of a bilious cholick, after a few days illness. Mrs. Best and Mrs. Scott are perfectly well, and had their distemper as slightly as possible. Lady Oxenden is under preparation by Mr. Sutton. I do not find that his patients complain of any thing worse than the calamity of eating apple-pye with the crust made of flour and water.

I hope if you do not find writing fatiguing to you after your day's journey, that I shall hear from you while you are on the road; at least, that I shall have the pleasure of hearing as soon as you conveniently can, that you are safely arrived in Hill-street. You mention setting out on the day se'nnight after the date of your letter, but what that date is, you kept a profound secret. Adieu, my dear friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER XCIV.

Tunstal, *June* 19, 1767.

My dearest Friend,

After a mighty quiet sober journey, I arrived last night about eight o'clock. My postillions seemed not at all animated by the laudable ambition of their profession, *d'ecraser tout le monde;* and as I was in no particular hurry, I left them entirely to their own prudent proceedings, which, upon the whole, I believe, like other prudent proceedings, was for my good, as the dust was much less troublesome than from London to Dartford; and after having parted with the greatest pleasure of my journey, I was obliged to content myself with the poor comfort of an abatement of its inconveniences. I hope you had an agreeable day at Danson's, and that you did not sleep the worse for the dust and stifling which you were so good to undergo on my account. I have been sitting in the air this morning in a very pretty situation, for which I find myself neither the worse nor the better, except that I enjoyed it on the account of my sister. I hope I shall get a little more comfortable

for

for the short time I am to remain here, for it is vexatious to find myself particularly good for nothing, during the only visit I have made to this place. I propose to set out from hence on Monday morning, and hope on Tuesday evening to be at Deal, where I shall impatiently long for the arrival of a letter from you. If you should be particularly hurried, however, as Monday is an early post, do not write then, and I will not be uneasy if I do not hear from you till Wednesday, though I shall wish for it before. Alas! in the long absence of so many months, it is all I shall have to supply the opportunity I have so lately enjoyed of having you every hour within my reach. I am happy, however, in leaving you so well, and I hope free from an apprehension which has so often been inconvenient to your schemes, and sometimes uneasy to your mind. I most heartily thank you for that instance of your friendship and affection, which in a trial in which you imagined your spirits might need some support, so kindly depended on me.

Be so good to give my love to our dear Sylph, and let her know that I am *inter vivos*, of which perhaps she may want to be convinced, as I seemed to be near the last gasp when she left me. My compliments to Mr. Montagu. I beg you will not have any manner of concern about

my

my health. I am not worse than I very often am, and these attacks are only present uncomfortableness, and *sans consequence*. My affectionate compliments wait on Mrs. Scott. I hope she went better through yesterday, than her morning seemed to promise. Adieu, my dear friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER XCV.

Deal, *July* 4, 1767.

I REJOICE, my dear friend, to hear that you have escaped the new epidemical disorder, and have no distemper but what is natural and common to all fine ladies, the forming more engagements than it is possible to digest. I am heartily sorry for the poor people whom this infirmity of your's deprived of their evening's entertainment; but how I am in any degree answerable for their disappointment, is, by all the methods of solution in my power, absolutely inexplicable.

Your description of our Sylph was exceedingly charac-

characteristic. Like Bartholomew cakes *, she always wants to get every play-thing in the whole fair, she would see every place in the world at one time, and all the people in the world at one view. This kind of disposition in others usually arises from a poverty of imagination, and an incapacity of internal entertainment; but this is very far from being the case with our friend, who, with as much *empressement* about external objects, as if she had no other resource, lives and thinks in a world of her own. How she contrives with such heart and good will to accommodate herself so fully to the awkward customs and manners of mere actually existing men and women, is very surprizing, and only to be accounted for from her extreme good nature. You mention her going out of town on Wednesday: I suppose for the present it will be no further than Old Windsor. It vexes one to think of her taking that disagreeable journey to Scarborough, from which I fear there is very little reason to expect much benefit to her health. Indeed one is tempted to think she has imperceptibly formed the necessity of going for the sake of the sentimental distress of being obliged to take a different route from Mr. Vesey, and

* In Ben Jonson's play of "Bartholomew Fair."

being

being at a strange place, and at a great distance from every body she knows and loves. I fear by the positive manner in which she speaks, that we must give up the hope of her being in town next winter. The longer one lives in the world, the more strongly one becomes attached to its most reasonable pleasures, and the more sensibly will be felt every separation from the society of those in whom one has been so happy to find the qualifications which merit esteem and love *.

I am very glad to hear that you are going to

* This seems to be expressed too generally, and with too little qualification. It is probably true only up to a certain time of life, varying according to strength of animal constitution, rather than of mental feeling. Mrs. Carter was herself an instance of this in the Editor's own knowledge. She felt much more acutely the loss, or the misfortunes, of her friends, in the middle period of her life, than she did when she was approaching to, or arrived at, old age. Her feelings were then much less acute, though her affections were perhaps equally warm. It would indeed be melancholy if our attachment to worldly objects of affection, increased in proportion as the time draws nearer when we must quit them; but the reverse is commonly the case. Whether this be because the aged look forward to a speedy re-union with those they love; or whether worldly attachments sit loosely on their minds, from the consideration that they cannot last long, it may not be easy to determine; but whoever has lived much, and intimately, with old persons, will not be likely to deny the truth of the fact.

San-

Sandleford, and I hope the summer will meet you there. The weather has been extremely uncomfortable for most days since I came hither, and has brought back all the relaxation of last year. I am happy that you find no ill effect from it, but that you have a sufficient stock of health to enable you to go through such a task as you describe.

We talk here, and I should think from the manner in which I heard it, not without foundation, that the seals have been offered to Lord Holdernesse, whether he will accept them I know not. Indeed it seems of no great consequence what particular person goes out or comes in, as there seems to be nothing in the general system of politics likely to produce any great good. Of that only true policy, the aim of which is to make a nation virtuous and happy, there does not appear to be any idea existing, through all the various changes of men and of measures that have happened among us. All the rest is mere party and faction, and the opposition of jarring interests among individuals.

I hope soon to hear that you are got well out of town, and enjoying the quiet and leisure of Sandleford. Adieu, my dear friend, I am,

Your most obliged, &c.

LETTER XCVI.

Deal, *July* 6, 1767.

At my *reveil* this morning I was most agreeably surprized by the intelligence which your letter gave me, and will not attempt to tell you how much I rejoice in the hope of seeing you, and of seeing you here. The only allay to my pleasure is, that no body is likely to be the better for you, but myself. My brother and sister have an engagement of long standing to set out for Hampshire next Monday, which they exceedingly regret. My Father and Mrs. Douglas are going for change of air on Wednesday to Woodchurch: but will put off their journey some days, if they can have any hopes of seeing you before they set out; so I write now, besides expressing my joy at the thought of seeing you, to inquire whether it is possible for you to come early in next week. For it would hurt me to think there was nobody here to receive you but I and the shrimps, of which you shall have as many as can be got for love or money. Mrs. Primrose and Mrs. Underdown have been some time at Canterbury, which is another of my vexations. But is it not possible

possible as the distance from Denton is not more than you often make an airing, that you could come very soon for a night or so before my friends here set out, and then come again while I am in my solitude, and after you have paid your visit to your paternal mansion, and stay with me as long as ever you can. We will take airings about this fine country, or you shall enjoy your post chaise by yourself, and we will only walk together by the sea shore. You may be assured of a very well aired bed, and Mrs. Susan shall have one extremely near you. This is an exceeding healthy air, and so different from any to which you are accustomed, that I really think, besides its making me happy, the change might be of service to your health.

I am sorry to hear that London is so sickly. It was very comfortable to me in reading this account, to think by the time it reached me you would not be there. What a stroke to the poor Duchess of Beaufort must the loss of Lady H. W. be?

I have read Mr. Gray's installation ode, but we will talk it over *de vive voix*, as well as Mr. Harris and Aristotle, and a hundred other subjects. I could sing for joy at the thought of seeing you. I will get myself as well as possible against you come. If I had known when you

set out from town, I would have writ to the Penningtons', who I am sure would have been glad to pay their respects to you as you past through Sittingbourn. Adieu, my dearest friend. Do not let any thing I have said hurry you to come before it is convenient or agreeable to you. If it is not conformable to your schemes to come soon, I will prevail on my father and Mrs. Douglas to go to Woodchurch, as it is a point of health, and to trust the chance of seeing you at their return; or perhaps when you are in that country, you may be so good, if Woodchurch is within distance of Horton *, to see them there. My head has lately had some such severe attacks of pain, that it is very confused; but I hope you will be able to make out my meaning. The meaning of my heart you are assured is ever

Most affectionately, &c.

P. S. Pray send me word how you do after your journey.

* In which parish is Mount Morris, the seat of Mrs. Montagu's eldest brother, Mr. Robinson, afterwards Lord Rokeby.

LETTER XCVII.

Deal, *July* 23, 1767.

I AM heartily grieved, my dear friend, in thinking what you must have suffered from so much severe pain. This wet summer has been very unfavourable both to rheumatic and nervous constitutions, and indeed in some way or other most people are disordered by its effects.

I know not very well what my head has been like for this last week, I only know that it has been in excessive pain. It is not to be wondered, that I should have felt every constitutional disorder aggravated by the exercise my mind has undergone from the sad situation of one of our servants, who has lost her senses. The confusion into which this accident has thrown the family, the bustle of domestic inconveniences, and above all, the agitation and depression of my spirits from such a deplorable object, have quite worn me down. Though I have been greatly affected, I have, however, I thank God, been more free from terror than might have been expected from some circumstances that were pretty alarming. She is still in the house, but strictly watched. I

am

am better this evening than I have been since this accident happened, and I hope shall soon get into a more comfortable way when she is removed.

I very heartily congratulate you on the advantageous establishment of Miss Kitty Botham. It gives one joy to see a family raised from such melancholy apprehensions as must have deprest those poor girls, and it will be the removal of a weight from your mind.

I do not recollect any passage in Demosthenes about Orestes. But indeed I am not very well read in him, one would think the instance more like Socrates, but I cannot find it there. I rejoice to hear you are so well, in order to continue so, do not suffer business to usurp too much on air and exercise.

I have at present the unexpected pleasure of seeing Mrs. Dunbar at Deal. Mr. Dunbar and she are upon a rambling scheme for this month, and have very kindly for me taken lodgings for some part of the time in this place. I am flattered by their appearing so charmed with the situation. Our friend, Mr. J. Pitt, has been extremely ill; but he is now tolerably recovered. I see by the papers Miss Friend is married; do tell me if it is advantageously, which I shall be very glad to hear. I believe I wrote you a hundred enquiries about it in my last.

I hope

I hope that more favorable weather will give you an enjoyment of the country. I scarcely ever saw so little of it as since my last return to Deal, for by one impediment or other, I have scarcely ever walked out. But all, I hope, will mend. Adieu, my dear friend. I am,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER XCVIII.

Deal, *August* 21, 1767.

It must have been some strange blundering expression of mine, that could lead you, my dear friend, to mistake what I meant to say about your mention of Shakespear's ghosts. My objection was this: you say "his ghosts are spirits blest, or goblins damned," and in a line or two after, you enter into a more particular description, and say his ghosts are sullen, &c. Now, though all these epithets agree perfectly well with the goblins, &c. they certainly do not agree with the "spirits blest," and therefore it seemed to me, that if you mentioned both classes you should not have confined yourself to epithets which respect only one, and leave the other unproved.

proved. I know not whether I have exprest myself more clearly now than I did before, but I have certainly used more words.

I did not repeat my opinion about your doctrine of fable and allegory, because I had told you before that it seemed to me to be perfectly just. Do not expunge your assertion about the avenger of blood at Athens; for I am by no means sure, and indeed it is most probable, that Brumoy would not have advanced it without authority. Perhaps you may find it in Plutarch's Solon. In most of the other observations I rather intend to propose doubts to your consideration, than to advance any opinion. The Sybil was certainly a prophetess, and the "Mugire Solum," &c. in the sixth of Virgil, seems very like the effects ascribed to enchantment. I have not at present time or spirits to look over any passage. My father is very ill. I am heartily sorry to find Miss Friend's match * is as imprudent as I feared. If she is of age her friends did kindly and wisely to make the best of what they could not prevent.

* Daughter of Dr. Friend, Dean of Canterbury. She married Mr., afterwards General, Campbell, of the marines. This match was imprudent, because there was little fortune on either side; neither indeed did it turn out happily in other respects. They lived for many years in a state of separation.

If

If she is not, one cannot help regretting, that they had not resolution enough to avail themselves of that power, which the wisdom of the legislature has given, to restrain the wild extravagance of unthinking youth, and to prevent the effect of those sudden giddy inclinations, the indulgence of which so often intercepts all the comforts of succeeding life *.

I am much obliged to you for your kind solicitude about me on account of our poor servant. She is gone, and we had the pleasure of seeing her quite recovered first, except some remaining degree of perverseness and resentment against the other servants, yet how far she might have an appearance of reason for this resentment, there has been such a *brouillerie* amongst them, that I cannot tell.

By hearing nothing to the contrary, I imagine you left London on Thursday, and I hope you set out perfectly free from the head-ach. I am sorry to find you have so often a proof that this

* Mrs. Carter's opinion of the Marriage-act is made sufficiently clear by this passage. Yet it is one of those doubtful points which leaves much to be said on both sides, and concerning which wise and good persons think very differently. But one thing seems clear, that if it be just and right to put those checks in the way of youthful imprudence, care should be taken that they cannot be evaded by any increase of expence, and consequently by added imprudence.

evil is not merely the operation of heathen Greek, but may exist perfectly well without its assistance. Its a head which has nothing in it, but genius, talents, wit, judgment, four or five of the seven sciences, and all the Latin classics. It is hard to be sure, that such common furniture of a head should occasion the owner any kind of trouble; but as it is a sorrowful fact that it does, I beg you will take some care about it, and *de tems en tems* lose a little blood. You seemed to agree with me, when we talked upon this subject, that it would be right, and I hope you will not neglect it.

You told me you were going out of town. I suppose you set your face towards the North, but as you do not tell me so, I shall direct my letter to Hill-street, in hopes that Israel may be better acquainted with your route. I had a charming letter last week from our Sylph, who is got to the end of her journey to the great contentation of poor Mrs. Hancock, who being merely of terrestrial composition, must have felt every bone in her skin ach, by following the vagaries of her aërial companion, whose curiosity led her to perpetual excursions out of the plain turnpike road. I know not how near you will be to Scarborough, but I think if you get within the vortex of her attraction you can scarcely avoid paying her a visit, in spite of all your impatience for the delectable *agrément* of a coal mine.

I re-

I rejoice to find that Mr. J. Pitt is so well recovered. There is so much merit in his character, and his temper is so very amiable, that besides the inexpressible loss to our sweet friend, and the rest of his family, it must be felt by the whole circle of his acquaintance. He still feels some remaining inconvenience from his disorder, which prevents his going into Dorsetshire; so Mrs. Pitt and the children are come to him, which carried Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar from Deal some time before they proposed to leave it, which I should have regretted extremely, if my confinement, which begun the day they went, would not have prevented my having any enjoyment of their stay. Lord and Lady Holdernesse are gone from Walmer castle; Mrs. Best has been for some time at Dover castle; she called here on Saturday, and enquired very kindly after you.

I hope you will soon give me the pleasure of hearing from you. It is excessively awkward and mortifying to me to be in utter uncertainty where you are: for while my friends and I are sojourners upon the face of the earth, it mightily assists my reveries about them to be provided with some local ideas of their situation. Adieu, my dear friend. I am ever,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER XCIX.

Deal, *September* 17, 1767.

I AM much obliged to you, my dear friend, for your kind communication of the great advantages, which you have so good a prospect of deriving from your colliery. You may depend on my not mentioning any of the particulars. God grant you long life, and health and cheerful spirits, to enjoy this new-found treasure, and (give me leave to add) every assistance to enable you to discharge so important a stewardship. This is a point in which so few conduct themselves properly, and which an unerring authority has pronounced so difficult, that, without any impeachment of the highest understanding, one may be allowed to feel some solicitude for the virtue of a friend, under such circumstances of dangerous trial; and the more, in proportion as every temptation acquires additional strength from uncommonly vivid powers of mind.——But I only meant to pray, not to preach.

I hope soon to have the pleasure of hearing that you are perfectly free from your cold. Surely, without some unavoidable necessity of exertion, you should keep yourself quiet, and endeavour

to

to get rid of it before it is fixed by the approach of winter.

I am sorry that you are engaged in so disagreeable an act of justice; but indeed, it is absolutely necessary for the good of society, as well as for private security, that knavery should not be suffered to go unpunished. The world must soon become a habitation of wild beasts in a human form, if no check is put upon rogues to prevent their robbing and worrying others. I rejoice that the fault is not capital, for that would indeed be impossible for you to bring to justice. Much villany, I believe, might be prevented, if our laws had not deterred good minds from the prosecution of many offences by the infliction of the last punishment.

I enclose you Sir G. Elliot's verses, and beg you will be so good as to let me have them again, as I have no copy.

I will certainly follow your prescription, and my own system, of a good deal of exercise, when I am able to take it, but this has seldom been the case since I came home; and I have, for some time, often been incapable of walking a quarter of a mile, without very painful fatigue.

I have just seen Mrs. Underdown, who desires her compliments to you; but affirms that it is very monstrous and unnatural in you not to take

so pretty an opportunity as the conveyance of a collier to transport yourself to Deal. My father's best respects attend you. I have not seen Mr. and Mrs. Douglas to-day, but will give them the pleasure of your obliging message when I do.

I have not heard of our Sylph's adventure in the roaring ocean. As little of the turbulent as there is in her composition, the uproar of a stormy sea is as much adapted to the sublime of her imagination, as the soft murmurs of a gliding stream to the gentleness of her temper *. Do not you pity her, with all her love of the marvellous, for missing the sight of a strange phenomenon,

* What a delightful idea of Mrs. Vesey's character do these few words convey! But the number of those who remember the original, decreases every day, and there are not now many persons who can vouch for the justness of this beautiful sketch. The traces of her interesting evening parties grow gradually fainter, and are principally kept in remembrance by the varied caricatures of the celebrated, but little understood, *Bas bleu* Society, as drawn by novel writers or the authors of memoirs of their own times. The Veseys, the Carters, and the Montagus, with their distinguished friends, belong already to the days that are past, and a former century —and yet—*O noctes cœnæque Deum*? whoever has had the fortune to be admitted to that society, as the Editor had in his youth, with sufficient taste to enjoy it, might now perhaps wander in vain, through the multiplied streets of the enlarged metropolis, and find nothing "*simile aut secundum.*"

which

which an article from Ireland mentions to have happened lately in her own river, the Liffy.

I should be more inclined to envy you, for the sight of Alnwick Castle, and still more the old monastery, than for a view of the finest modern seat in England. I am glad you found so much entertainment from the ruin and your conductor.

I have no list of Glasgow Greek authors, for I have only Herodotus and Thucydides. Mr. William Robinson has been very kind in his assistance to my brother Harry, since he has been confined by an unfortunate accident, which all his friends have great reason to be thankful had no worse consequences.

Adieu, my dear friend, I am,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER C.

Deal, *September* 30, 1767.

Many thanks to you, my dear friend, for your fine picture of the environs of Alnwick. As I have, at least, as much of the Goth as of the Athenian, in my composition, I find, at least, as much pleasure in wandering over what you classical

classical people, would style the uncouth monuments of our untutored ancestors, as I should find in the more accurate productions of polished Greece.

Indeed, I never should have suspected that wealth would be dangerous to you from that passion of tenacious avarice, which consists in merely "beholding it with the eyes," nor from the sordid pleasures which give it charms to the voluptuary; and you can need no preaching from me, while you have so just a sense of its only danger to more exalted spirits, the dedicating too large a portion of it to the "pride of life," in all its variety of glittering expence; and which is ranged in the same class with the other two, as equally destructive, though of a more plausible appearance. The fine arts, indeed, are a specious temptation, and every moderate and regulated encouragement of them cannot, I should suppose, be a fault. But, besides the first argument against any excess in this respect, as a violation of the principles of duty, there appears to me another reason that should guard *you* against too great an attachment to them, that it weakens the force of the understanding and contracts the powers of the mind. I am sensible that, to most people, this position would appear a paradox, but I flatter myself that, as I have found some

other

other of my odd notions to be, it will be intelligible to you. All execution falls so short of the great and original conceptions of the soul, that by a habit of dwelling on imperfect copies, all the sublime of the imagination is lowered, and this noblest and most unlimited of all our faculties, is dwindled down to a mere elegant trifler, and an accurate critic on the minutiæ and playthings of art. Much, I think, might be advanced in defence of this point, both from theory and from experience; but, in both instances, you are too well supplied for me to enlarge upon it any further.

Before this, I suppose, the news of the Duke of York's death must have got to the North. I believe it reached us before it was known at St. James's. There is something very melancholy in the thought of a poor young man cut off in the full career of a licentious life, and in a rank which rendered the example so particularly hurtful. But princes are, from their infancy, beset by human demons, who present temptations to wickedness, before the understanding discerns it to be such.

I see by the news, that Lord Palmerstone is married to Miss Poole; and a Lady —— Termor to a Mr. Clayton. I think there are no unmarried Lady Termors but Lady Louisa; can

you tell whether this article respects her Ladyship? If it does, I hope it is a match answerable to the merit of her character.

I imagine our dear Sylph is, by this time, embarking on the Irish Sea. I had a letter from her about ten days ago. She contents herself with not being the worse for Scarborough; indeed there was little reason to think she would be much the better. I much wished her to have tried Tunbridge; but she had a prepossession, and a prepossession with our Sylph is a reason. Mr and Mrs. J. Pitt were to go to Encombe last week. He is, by no means, so well as might be wished; but indeed his distemper is of a tedious kind. Little Maria was very ill in London, but recovered before they left it; the poor child is so often ill, that it keeps Mrs. Pitt in constant anxiety.

Adieu, my dear friend.

I am, &c.

LETTER CI.

Deal, *October* 17, 1767.

I HEARTILY rejoice with you, my dear friend, on your near prospect of quitting the cold confines of the North pole, which must be downright petrifying, while, even we, in a warmer climate, find it difficult to keep ourselves from freezing; not that I much regret this strange severe weather, as it is preferable to the miserable relaxation of heat and damp united.

I heartily wish you success in your school. You will find a noble subject of happiness, if the event answers your intention, in the reflection of having rescued so many human creatures from dark ignorance, and the temptations of brutal vice, to right principles and civilized manners. But, whatever may happen to disappoint the present reward, there is reversion secured beyond the reach of all mortal impediments.

I am obliged to you for Mr. Wodehouse's Ode, which is very pretty. I recollected the 2d of October, as indeed I am never in any danger of forgetting it.

Is it necessary to the efficacy of whey, that it

must disconcert the whole order of your features? that which I used to drink at Kensington was not unpleasant, and, I should suppose, as cooling as your horrid potion. I would fain have continued it here, but our servants made such fearful work of it, that I was obliged to desist. I will provide against this if I live till another year.

Notwithstanding all the fine things which poets say of the song of the nightingale, I am beginning to listen with much greater pleasure to the autumnal notes of the red-breast. Indeed, I am upon many accounts, heartily glad to take leave of a summer, during which, to say nothing of my own health, I have, by one means or other, been in almost perpetual alarms. But in a world like this, wherever people have numerous connections and strong feelings, frequent interruptions of tranquillity must be expected. I have reason to be thankful that mine are not more frequent, and that those I have this year suffered, are happily past over. I am now beginning to look forward with spirit towards January.

I have heard nothing of our dear Sylph, since about a week before she proposed to leave Scarborough. I hope, amidst our late equinoctial storms, she has found some halcyon day to convey her safely over the Irish Sea. I long to know

know where she is. I know too well where she will not be, when I hope to be in Clarges-street. I shall inexpressibly regret the hours which I passed so happily with her last winter. I find that years, instead of weakening, only serve to strengthen my attachment to the people I esteem and love, in proportion, perhaps, as they render many other things disagreeable, which, in the less determined pursuits of youth, used to appear merely indifferent.

I am sorry to find that there has appeared any reason for breaking off the match, of which there seemed so good a prospect, as possibly it might have taken some solicitude off your mind, from the consideration that a good husband may be among the class of indifferent things to poor ——.

In spite of all your impatience to be set out, and of my own to know of your being, in some degree within my reach, I was glad to find you had not begun your journey, as the papers give such lamentable accounts of the violent floods in Yorkshire, that I was uneasy with the apprehension that you might be liable to the disagreeable inconvenience of being stopt in the midst of your progress. By this time, I hope, the roads are become more practicable and pleasant.

I rejoice to hear you are better, and capable of going through such variety of business. Your power

power of exertion is a really more enviable good than your coal-mine. From my present utter want of any such power, I very feelingly comprehend its advantages. It is happy for me that mine is too insignificant a situation, for this miserable languor to affect any one in any degree, but myself; and that my principal task is to endeavour to submit quietly to the humiliating circumstance of finding myself good for no earthly thing. Very often I am incapable of reading, and utterly unable to walk, and with a head much too confused to think. So I can only amuse myself with the dim imperfect ideas which are presented to me through the medium of a kind of twilight understanding. My spirits, however, when my heart is at ease about others, are good, which is a great blessing.

I can give you some account of our dear Mrs. Vesey, though not so late a one as I could wish. She truly guessed that I should be very anxious in the uncertainty whether she might not be embarked in one of the late terrible storms, so kindly wrote from Holyhead, where she was waiting for a calmer sea. She was just arrived from her journey through Anglesea and over Penmuenmaur. In the midst of her passage through these wild regions, she and Mrs. Hancock were overtaken by a tempest, which greatly heightened the

the sublime and terrible of the scene; and you may guess what a description such an adventure would furnish to an imagination like her's. Her letter was dated on the 6th of October, and she was to have embarked the next day, but another storm arose in the night, and in the postscript of her letter, which was dated on the 9th, she was still at Holyhead. The weather has been so favorable for many days since that time, that I hope there can be no doubt but that she must have secured her passage long before Sunday last, when, I think the wind was, for some hours, more violent than in any of the preceding storms. Mr. Vesey was not arrived from Paris, when she wrote to me.

Adieu, my dear friend. I hope you will find all your affairs *en bon train*, by the time you get into Yorkshire; and shall be very happy to hear that you are proceeding well and pleasantly in your journey. I am, ever,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER CII.

Deal, *November* 7, 1767.

I WAS beginning to grow very uneasy, my dear friend, at not hearing from you, when your letter last night made me happy by an account of your being got to the end of your journey. Both your letters came at the same time, which was a fortunate circumstance for me, as I should have suffered so much anxiety if I had first received that which was dated from Grantham. God be thanked, that your illness, which began in so alarming a way, past off so lightly. Your Newcastle fever, I find, is of the same nature with ours, which begins with a strong delirium, and this continues in a certain degree, for some time after the fever is subdued, so far as to impair all recollection and memory. I very sensibly feel the kindness of your wishing for me. Indeed, the apprehension of your ever being very ill, is a circumstance which always renders your being at a great distance, extremely uncomfortable to me. If there was any security of your continuing well, I know you are always too much employed, and too well amused, for me to fancy

myself of any use to you, but I make myself amends for this opinion of my own insignificance, by thinking I could be of some consequence, at least by my quietness and attention whenever you are sick. God preserve you from feeling them necessary to you.

I have longed to know where to direct to you for this last week, from my impatience to acquaint you with my great obligations to Mr. and Mrs. Pulteney *. There is nothing which I can say on the subject, which will do them so much honor, as my sending you a copy of Mr. Pulteney's letter. I likewise send you a copy of my answer. Be so good to return them next post; and do not mention my having sent them; when I hear again, I will let you know the effect of my letter. The General seems to have made an equitable distribution to his relations of the bulk of his fortune, and to have dealt kindly with his friends in the legacies. I am glad he has made

* For the annuity of £100 settled by them on Mrs. Carter in a most kind and handsome manner; which the late Lady Bath, their daughter, afterwards increased to £150. They supposed themselves under obligations to Mrs. Carter, for the share which she had, with Mrs. Montagu, in prevailing on General Pulteney to leave the principal part of his fortune to them.

so handsome a provision for Miss Wroughton, and given an annuity to Lady M. Car.

I perfectly comprehend your description of the *ennui* of uninteresting conversation, though I thank my stars, it is a circumstance to which I am not often liable, as people of very little consequence in the world derive, among other advantages of the want of importance, the privilege of chusing their own society; which cannot be enjoyed by those whom a more extensive sphere of action engages in a more general commerce with the world.

A thousand thanks to you, my dear friend, for your kind injunction of my sending for you if I should want nursing; but this, I thank God, is not the case, nor I hope likely to prove so. Eat vinegar with my meat! I must first learn to eat meat with my vinegar; for, I believe, literally, I have not been able to swallow at the rate of two ounces in a week, for a considerable time, and even that by mere dint of acids. However, I think, my appetite is upon the whole growing better. I could not defer writing this post, as I thought you would expect to hear from me; and I was besides uneasy at the thought of delaying a moment to acquaint you with the very generous behaviour which I have experienced from Mr. and Mrs. Pulteney.

I do

I do not like the thought of your going to Sandleford, after so wet a season, it must be very damp, and I am afraid you will run a great hazard of renewing your cold. Do pray write me a line, when you return the copies, to let me know how you do, and whether you set out for Sandleford on Thursday.

If you should see my Lord Lyttelton, I shall be obliged to you if you will be so good as to present my respects, and best thanks to him for the favor of his history, which I am reading with a high degree of pleasure. Indeed, it is very nobly written, and I think must do him great honor. Adieu, my dear friend, pray take care of yourself; and, after so much fatigue of business and travelling, try to accommodate yourself for a little time, at least, to absolute indolence and repose. I shall be rejoiced to hear that you are got back to Hill-street, and that your health has suffered less from your going to Sandleford, in this wretched damp weather, than my fears incline me to apprehend. Indeed I should think no part of England, at present, so healthy as London.

I am utterly at a loss to account for Mrs. Pulteney's not answering your letters, at least, from any probable conjecture. I did not doubt your being charmed by the generosity and delicacy of

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the letter, of which I sent you a copy. I have since had the favor of hearing from Mrs. Pulteney, in which, with the utmost kindness and politeness, she informs me that the settlement shall be made as soon as the present hurry is over.

I heartily grieve for the distresses of poor, good Mrs. Freind, whether Mr. Campbell's apprehensions are real or pretended, they equally present a prospect of wretchedness for her giddy, inconsiderate daughter, and consequently for herself.

I was obliged to leave my letter unfinished the other night, to humour my impertinent fever, which, like time and tide in the almanack, stayeth for no man. It was necessary to pay it the greater attention from a very fatiguing day which I was to go through yesterday, in sitting over a table of provision for a pretty large company of hungry people, who, however incomprehensible such an action might appear to me, do really and effectively eat. I was to be sure excessively tired, but, as they were all very quiet, I went through it, upon the whole, better than I could have expected. To day is dry and cold, of which I feel the good effects, and have ventured to attempt a walk, and compassed more than a mile, so I hope I am growing much better, and that, by the next time I give an account of myself, it will be quite comfortable.

I have

I have not heard from Mrs. Vesey since she got to Ireland, but have the pleasure of knowing she is safely arrived at Lucan.

My father yesterday was fourscore years old, and, I thank God, is in a state of health that allows his family to hope for a continuance of the great blessing of his life some years to come *; and they may pray for it with the greatest comfort, as not being at all a burthen to himself. His understanding is as clear and as vivid as ever I remember it; and, except some degree of deafness, which is not constant, his senses as quick. So that, except a diminution of strength, which by no means amounts to debility, he feels very few even of the inconveniences, much less the pains of old age. His life has been past in many solicitudes for a numerous family, to which he has discharged his duty in a most uncommon way; and now enjoys the reward of it, by living to see some of them in a very prosperous, and all in a very comfortable situation.

* He lived near seven years after this; and much in the same state of health, both of mind and body; except that, for the last two years of his life, he ceased to use horse-exercise. He was a man of great learning, and of excellent moral character. His faculties were so unimpaired, that he studied hard, and rose early for that purpose even to the last. All his children spoke of him with the same affection and respect.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear friend. I hope your next letter will give me some intelligence about your return to London. I am ever,

Most faithfully, &c.

LETTER CIII.

Deal, *November* 14, 1767.

It was indeed a very real joy to me, my dear friend, to find you were so soon returned from your excursion into Berkshire, of which I could not help forming some uneasy apprehensions. I hope the relaxation and cheerful ease of that plan of life which you have traced out, will help to repair the mischiefs which your health has suffered from the application and fatigues of business. I perfectly agree with you that a sheltered situation, and the commerce of society, are the most proper circumstances for an invalid kind of disposition. Though the howling tempest and lowering sky, may afford a fine solemn amusement to the mind which can contemplate them without the interruption of internal pain; yet the delicate sensibility of varying health,

health, which is affected by every cloud, and convulsed by every rude blast of wind, will render the most sublime imagination incapable of attending to what would naturally supply it with so high a degree of pleasure.

I heartily rejoice with you on the inexpressible delight which you must have felt in seeing a whole honest family placed into a condition of acquiring a lasting comfortable situation by your means. Your arguments in favor even of poor worthless —— were full of justice and humanity, and worthy yourself.

I inclose you a letter which I received last night from Mrs. Chapone. I am persuaded that you will, if possible, give some encouragement to the person whom she recommends, as well from your approbation of a very laudable industry, as on the account of Mrs. Chapone.

I am so far from wishing you not to speak to Mr. and Mrs. Pulteney on the subject of my great obligations to them, that it would be very particularly agreeable to me that you should; though I could not ask you to do it after your account of Mrs. P's not having taken any notice of your letters. What I meant should not be mentioned, was my sending copies of the Letters, as I knew not how far that might be agreeable to them; though Mr. Pulteney's, wherever it is seen, must

must do him so much honor. I have not yet mentioned any part of the affair, except to my own family, and some few of my friends, as I think it had better not be published till the settlement is concluded. I shall then wish to have it known. I hope the world which gave me a painful proof of its good will in the censures which it passed on my Lord Bath *, will make me amends by the applauses which are so justly due to the uncommon generosity of his successors. I should be much obliged to you, if you would take some notice of this affair to them, as soon as ever it is convenient to you.

I think I scarcely ever recollect such a succession of storms as we have had this season. This morning, to the violence of an outrageous wind, we had the addition of thunder and lightning, which served to diversify the tempest by different notes; but had not that striking effect, as when it is preceded by that solemn pause, and dead silence of all the elements, with which it is usually introduced.

The kind concern which you express for my

* For not having provided for her in his will. But Mrs. Carter always defended him, by saying that she had no right to expect any thing from him, and that he had never given her reason to suppose that he meant to do any thing for her.

health,

health, is an additional motive to my taking all the care of it in my power. I always think people must have a world of virtue, who take great care of themselves, when they have nobody else who cares much about them: and yet, to be sure, this is a virtue which such people usually possess in a very eminent degree. Mrs. J. Pitt will be in town in less than ten days; I have just had a letter from her, in which she shows the goodness of her disposition, by the manner in which she mentions you, at the very time, when it is plain she is no stranger to your notorious flirting with her husband. Adieu, my dear friend. I very sensibly feel the affectionate conclusion of your letter, and am ever,

Most tenderly, &c.

LETTER CIV.

Deal, *November* 25, 1767.

Indeed, my dear friend, I am inclined to quarrel with you for taking your coach into impracticable roads such a cold night, when it

turned you out on the *pavé*; instead of employing your chair, which would have avoided all difficulties. I hope, however, you did not long suffer by the consequences of this exploit, and that I shall soon have the pleasure of knowing you have perfectly recovered it.

I was very happy to find you had written to Mrs. Pulteney; and am greatly rejoiced to find the reason which you had to think she had acted so improperly, arose from the carelessness of another. You cannot imagine how I felt myself distrest by it, upon many accounts; and particularly that I could not intreat you to be so good as to take notice of their very generous behaviour to me, at a time when I found you thought you had too much cause to be displeased by such a treatment of yourself; and yet your not taking any notice of it, must have been severely mortifying to me. But all this is now happily accommodated, and every circumstance which you mention with regard to this affair, contributes to render it as agreeable to me as possible. Indeed, my life has been marked with such a succession of blessings of so many various kinds, that, with the thankfulness which I ought, and hope I do feel for them, there is a strong mixture of awe and terror, when I reflect how small a proportion

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my improvements in virtue bear, to the mercies by which I am distinguished *.

When you write to Mrs. Scott be so good to return her my best thanks for that kind instance of her regard, by which I am so much obliged and flattered. I am very sorry for the loss she is likely to have of poor Mrs. Fielding; though she is not a lively companion, she is a friendly and good woman, and such a character will always be tenderly regretted.

I had a letter last night from our dear Sylph, who has been extremely ill; so ill, that she tells me the only happy moment she had for fourteen days, was in a fainting fit. God be thanked she is now getting well. Her disorder was a fever, attended by most violent suffering from rheumatic pains and spasms in her head. A blister has re-

* Compare this passage with Horace's,

Sperat infestis, meruit secundis
Alteram sortem bene preparatum
Pectus ——

And with a hundred other passages of the same kind in the heathen moralists; and how cold and trite do they appear! No adequate motive is assigned; no reference to a future life; no hope of pleasing, or fear of displeasing, the best and greatest Being. So that there was no reason to expect improvement in their moral conduct from their correction by adversity, nor from their gratitude in prosperity.

moved the pain, and she is at present free from all complaints, but of weakness and languor.

The witchery of good spirits would have seduced me yesterday, to dine out in a large company; but, aided and abetted by the strong dehortations of Mrs. Underdown and Mrs. Primrose, I resisted the temptation; and, indeed, their arguments acquired a wonderful force by my feeling how much they were in the right. By all this laudable attention to myself, I hope, by the time I set out for London, to have quite regained my usual health; and to enjoy the happiness of meeting you without the miserable alloy, which the highest felicity the world has to give, must undergo, from such a state of health as for so many weeks I have past through.

I wish you well through your tragedy; the *caput mortuum* of a Russian genius must be a direful dose to swallow, when the spirit of barbarism is drawn off. With a few wry faces one may well enough gnaw a crab; but it would make one sick to death to be stuffed with medlars.

Whatever truth there might be in the assertion of your old Grecian, it by no means, I think, affects our servants, who, God be thanked, are far enough from a state of slavery, and indeed may be considered as one of the most independant

classes

classes of our community. Their covenant is founded on a reciprocation of benefit; and, whenever the condition seems to be unequally observed, they may throw it up and depart. So that their faults do not appear to arise so much from their being servants, as, like those of their principals, from their being human creatures, biassed by that internal slavery, which has very little connection with external circumstances; but so far as it has, arises less immediately from their condition, than from that of their masters. It is a very pleasing subject of reflection, that no reasonable being is compelled to debase the dignity of an immortal soul, and to betray the interests of virtue, by becoming a slave to procure the *necessaries* of life; it is by voluntary choice that so many forfeit their liberty for its *superfluities*.

I heartily wish the society of the three ladies may render them all as happy together, as I believe each of them deserves to be separately. I am glad you are to have a retreat there, as I hope it will often furnish a relief to your health and spirits, when they have been harassed by the fatigues of the town.

Mrs. Chapone will think herself much obliged to you for sending to Mrs. Prescott, and will be very happy in your favorable opinion of her. I have written to Mrs. Howe in recommendation of her

her, who has been so good to promise to employ her sometimes for herself, and to speak to Lady Spencer and Lady Howe in her favor.

I take the liberty of troubling you with another epistle to Mrs. Norman to get her apartments ready for me by the fourth of January. I propose to set out from hence the week before, as I must pass a day or two at Tunstal and Lambeth. I shall have many reproaches for not making a little stay at Canterbury; but it is absolutely out of my power. My brother and sister Harry are with us this week, and their son, who is a fine, sturdy, little fellow, and as lively as he is strong. All this engages me a good deal, and I write *a plusieurs reprises*. They speak with great pleasure of Mr. and Mrs. William Robinson's *voisinage*. I wish they may meet with such kind neighbours in Berkshire, where they propose to go next spring.

I had very lately the pleasure of hearing, that our dear Mrs. Vesey is perfectly recovered of her late illness, though she has not yet had the grace to tell me so herself. Indeed, I cannot tell whether she has received my letter which I sent at all adventures, as the Sylph, with her usual disregard to all vulgar concerns, after enjoining me to write very soon, left me, as well as I could, to find out her direction.

Good

Good night, my dear friend, pray take care of yourself, and do not harass your health by more business and engagements, than your reason, not your imagination, pronounces to be necessary. Take notice, as a good woman, at whom I ungraciously laughed, used to say to me, that you are flesh and blood, and not iron and steel.

Yours, &c.

LETTER CV.

Lambeth, *May* 26, 1768.

It seems so long since I have had any communication with you, my dear friend, that I will positively write to-night, as I am impatient to know how you do, and how you found Mr. Montagu. The apprehensions which you discovered on parting with me, sunk my spirits. Indeed it is very probable that you may be soon engaged in a melancholy scene, but I trust you will be carried safely through it. God grant you may find an opportunity of being of more important use, than even by the comfort of your presence and attendance.

I came here yesterday, and found the Archbishop

bishop grievously harassed by the rheumatism, and very languid and low. Miss Talbot, though not well, is, I hope, growing better. I heartily wish they were all to change the air; the very altering their situation would, I am persuaded, have the effect of medicine. Mrs. Talbot is amazingly well, under all the fatigue she has endured for so many months. But poor soul, she is full of apprehensions, one half of which would vanish, if they could get into some new scenes: indeed it grieves my heart to see that my excellent and amiable friends here, suffer from such an entirely uniform unvaried life, which they do not allow themselves to think unpleasant, though they feel it at every hour.

It is amazing to observe how mechanical the mind is apt to grow in all its feelings, and how the same fears and the same anxieties unavoidably recur, in every spot where they have once made an impression, if there is no new and different object to withdraw the attention. Doctor Ford has been proposing Bath for the Archbishop, which I heartily wish he may be prevailed on to try, for the journey, and change of air and place, will, I am certain, do them all good, whatever effect the waters may produce.

Our sweet friend in Arlington-street * left town

* Mrs. Pitt.

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on Monday. I dined with her on Sunday, and met Mr. and Mrs. Pery *, so you may imagine we had a copious subject of conversation in Mrs. Vesey, who is very well, and I hope there is no doubt, but that we shall have the joy of seeing her in our society next winter. Mr. and Mrs. Perry are agreeable people, and he has a most remarkable look of sense, which indeed was verified by all I heard him say. On Monday I dined at Mr. Pulteney's. I met Mrs. Chapone at Miss Burrows's on Tuesday, and she gives a mighty good account of our poor little foundling, who behaves very prettily, and with great affection to the people with whom she is placed. One of the reasons which she assigns for her fondness is, that they give her food enough, which she represents as a deficient article in the workhouse; and says, that on Fridays particularly she never had any dinner. Surely the parish-officers have not made a papist the mistress. If this is not the case, the loss of one dinner in a week is of no great consequence. There seems to have been due care taken in more essential points, for the child is tolerably well instructed, and I hope will turn out a good servant.

* Mr. Pery, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons; afterwards Lord Pery, and father of the present Earl of Limerick.

Your

Your arguments and observations on the treatment of servants, and your reasons for their altered manners, are in some respects just, and in others are so very ingenious, that it grieves me to attempt at confuting any part of them; and yet like many other ingenious arguments, I think there is at bottom a little fallacy in them, at least that they are not to be restrained to the condition of servants, but extends to all the subordinate ranks of life. The milliner and mantua-maker, for instance, who makes a cap, and a tippet, or trims a gown for a fanciful fine lady, must act from the caprice of that fine lady, and has no more personal interest in the tippet or the gown which neither of them was to wear, than John or Thomas in the fire, at which neither of them was to be warmed. Servants may, if they please, act as entirely by their own suggestion and contrivance in the disposition of their business, as artificers in the management of their materials, unless they happen to meet with very unreasonable masters, in which case they have a greater freedom of change than the artificer or mechanic. I have not time at present to pursue this subject, which is capable of great enlargement: what I mean in general is, that this condition has no more natural tendency to fetter and corrupt an immortal soul than any other, but that the mischief

chief arises from accidental circumstances *. Does not that abominable luxury particularly, of which you speak with so just an abhorrence, and by which so many of these poor people are undone, operate equally on all the members of the family? If it tempts the servants to idleness, and picking pockets, to maintain the habit, when they are on their own hands, does it not likewise just as forcibly tempt the younger sons, when they are left to shift for themselves, to defraud the community by the rogueries of office, and by political venality, and the daughters to ruin tradesmen, in support of the expensive elegancies, for which they never pay? What you say of establishing servants in a comfortable *menage* of their own, after they have for a reasonable time discharged their duty in another, is noble and generous, and worthy yourself. It is certainly incumbent on their principals, wherever it can be done, and it might be done much oftener, if

* It seems evident from the epistles, that a large proportion of the early Christians were domestic servants; and nothing appears in the writings of the Apostles to lead us to suppose that they considered that way of life to be exposed to more moral dangers than any other. St. Paul sent back Onesimus, about whom he felt and expressed so warm an interest, to his servitude, without any particular caution with respect to his situation.

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the money that is lavished on the foolish superfluities by which servants are so greatly hurt, was appropriated to assist them in procuring a comfortable establishment. The rank of the head of a large family is an awful, and strictly accountable charge. Wherever it is executed, so far as human weakness will allow, to the full extent of the duty, I should think that the interests of virtue would be more likely to be promoted, than hurt, by a great number of domestics; though it must be allowed, that where no regard is had to the morals and behaviour of a numerous collection of undisciplined human creatures, there will arise all the mischievous consequences which you describe.

I rejoice to hear that Mr. Montagu is better. It was like yourself to write and ease my anxiety on your account, as well as his, for when you are uneasy, I must be so likewise, being most truly

Yours, &c.

LETTER CVI.

Deal, *June* 21, 1763.

It is a perfect age, my dear friend, since I had the pleasure of hearing from you. Of how many years that age exactly consists, I cannot tell, as it has no date; I only know you had not received my last letter when it was writ, and that I feel excessively impatient and *desolée*, at being so long without receiving any intelligence whether you are well, or ill, or remember, or have forgot me. This last deluge of rain has, I fear, encreased your cramps; but the sun has looked bright and friendly to-day, and the evening is soft and calm, without any mixture of languor in the air; so it is to be hoped a fairer season is approaching, and that we shall both be the better from its influence.

Your objections would be exceedingly just against the uniformity, of what is usually understood, by natural instinct, which certainly operates very differently, in the various dispositions of human creatures, from its effects in mere animals. But when I talked of an instinctive spirit, I understood by it, an extraordinary impulse, adapted

adapted to such extraordinary trials and dangers, as do not happen in the common accidents or occurrences of life.

We have often agreed in taking notice of strange comic starts, which sometimes break out in Euripides. I have lately been reading a striking instance of this kind in the Alcestis, where such a description is given, of the boisterous roaring jollity of Hercules, as is perfectly ridiculous. Is it not surprising that Euripides, who had so wonderful a power of exciting the tenderest sympathies of the heart, should take the most effectual method to counteract his own purpose, by informing his audience, in this play particularly, in the very first scene, that all their sorrows would be *a pure perte*, as Alcestis was to be snatched from death by Hercules? I think there is no instance in which his want of art in this respect, has so unlucky an effect as in this tragedy. One would think that Bottom and Peter Quince had copied him in the prologue, that the lion was no lion, and that Pyramus was not killed indeed.

Talking of Greek tragedy recals to my mind a passage I found in Plato, on the subject of theatrical compositions, which I will transcribe.

After proscribing the poets in general, as giving false notions of the Deity, and indulging the passions

sions of men, he particularly considers tragedy as an imitation, and then proceeds to shew, how ill an effect such an imitation will naturally produce on the minds of young people, and then goes on:—" Non permittemus igitur ullo modo eos quorum habendam curam dicimus, quosque præstantes viros esse oportet, cum viri sint, mulierem imitari, adolescentem vetulamve, vel marito convitiantem, vel cum diis contendentem, exultantemque cum se felicem esse putet: vel quæ ærumnis circumventa fleat atque ejulet. Neque servos, et servas, ea quæ servorum sunt facientes—neque viros item pravos, ut videtur, timidos et contraria eorum quæ diximus, facientes, convitiantes, jurgantes turpiaque inter se obloquentes, sive ebrios, sive vigiles sobriosque, et alia quotcunque homines isti et in verbis et in operibus, tum in seipsos, tum alii in alios peccant. Neque enim debent—Similes se per imitationem, vel verbis, vel actionibus insanientibus reddere. Cognoscendi enim insani et mali sunt, tam viri quam mulieres. Nihil tamen ex eorum dictis et factis vel agendum est vel imitandum."

I send you the Latin translation, as I am sure I could not translate Plato's Greek into English, so as to please myself. I a little question the exactness of the Latin version of the last period, as I think the "*agendum est*" does not clearly express

express Plato's meaning, which I apprehend to be, that nothing belonging to mad or wicked people, ought to be a subject either for poetry, or for imitation *.

Greek tragedy naturally puts one in mind of Mr. Mason, who has so well imitated all its beauties, without retaining any of its faults. He is at Walmer castle with Lord Holdernesse. Mr. Gray † has been on a visit to Mr. Wm. Robinson. Mr. Mason tells me he is very deep in the study of natural history. I believe you will agree with

* Mrs. Carter was so exact a critic, and had so complete a knowledge of the learned languages, that great deference must always be paid to her opinion upon those subjects; yet it would rather seem that Plato is referring here more particularly to dramatic poetry, which is the reason why his translator makes use of the word *agendum*. And then the meaning may be, that "nothing belonging to mad or wicked people is a fit subject either for representation on the stage, or for any other species of moral poetry." That is to say more particularly, the epic; to which the word *imitandum* may especially relate.

† The Rev. William Robinson, Mrs. Montagu's younger brother, then resided at Denton Court, near Canterbury, where Mr. Gray used to visit him, and was much delighted with the scenery of the grounds and adjacent country. Denton Court is now one of the seats (though not at this time inhabited by him) of Sir Egerton Brydges, Bart. M. P. the Editor's dear and valued friend, whose second and present lady was one of the daughters of Mr. William Robinson.

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me in wishing, he was rather employed in weaving garlands of the immortal flowers of Parnassus, than in picking up nettles and chick-weed from the surface of the vulgar earth. I am promised a copy of Mason's Epitaph on Miss Drummond, and his own wife, which I hear are both extremely fine. When they are in my possession you shall see them, if they have not fallen in your way already. I had not the courage to ask Mr. Mason himself for them, though I have seen him pretty often. Lady Mary Coke has been with Lady Holdernesse *: I dined at the castle one day while she was there, and she enquired very much after you. The weather happened to be so fine, that we spent the whole afternoon in wandering along the sea-shore, and this rambling kind of amusement rendered the day particularly cheerful and pleasant. I am now going to dine at the castle for the last time this summer, as Lady Holdernesse leaves it in a

* This amiable, sensible, and sweet-tempered lady, was a kind and warm friend to Mrs. Carter, from the time of their first acquaintance to the day of her death. The Editor remembers with particular delight the days which he had the honor to pass in her society, when, after Lord Holdernesse's death, she spent her summers at Deal castle. Her conversation was so full of anecdote, and of knowledge of life, and her manners so agreeable, that it was always a treat to be in her company.

day or two, and I believe returns no more this year. I hear Lord and Lady Camden are to be there, but I am not at all interested in its being either false or true, as I have not the honour of their acquaintance.

The compliments of my father, and all here, wait on you. I thank God he is very well, and his understanding as lively as ever. I am happy in his having some exercise for it, in our new curate, who is a sensible and conversable man, and I believe a good scholar. I have lived very quiet and solitary since I came home, and scarcely ever gone out. Indeed my own apartment is so very *riant*, and I am so much attached to it, that it always requires an effort for me to quit it. My present study is Plato's Republic and Bentivoglio's Letters. Indeed he is the only Italian politician whom one could possibly read at the same time with Plato; for in all his writings he appears to have much less of the roguery and *traperie* of his nation, than any of the Italian historians and negociators I ever read. The collection of letters I am now reading is new to me. The style is lively and elegant, and free from the wretched *concetti* which are so tiresome in most Italian writers; but he appears to have been an honest man, and honesty of heart, and simplicity of understanding, are mighty apt to accompany each other.

If

If Mr. Montagu continues tolerably well, I imagine you will make great progress this summer in your Shakespear; but I hope you will not fix so closely to it, as to hinder your more important scheme of growing fat, which I most heartily wish to see happily accomplished, and I had much rather the world should keep blundering on about Shakespear, than you continue a skeleton, by endeavouring to set them right.

I am much obliged to you for your political intelligence. Alas! my dear friend, are men, whose follies, and whose vices, have rendered their own fortunes desperate, likely to prove very able, or faithful administrators of the public concerns?

"There is,
Can be, no public, without private virtue."

I have but one more frank in the world. Pray can you give me any positive intelligence of our Sylph, she has not writ to me time immemorial. Adieu.

Yours, &c.

LETTER CVII.

Deal, *July* 9, 1768.

Though I wrote to you so lately, my dear friend, yet knowing how anxious you are for a direction to our dear Sylph, I would not let a post pass without informing you she is in Kildare-street, Dublin; she talks of going for some part of the summer to Dawson Grove, but does not say when.

It was very happy that terrible storm, which you describe, had no worse effect than making you all huddle together like a hen and chickens under a shed. One has the more reason to be thankful from the accounts of its mischiefs in other places. On that very evening I was walking along the sea-shore at St. Margaret's, with Lady Holdernesse. When we sat out the wind was strongly to the East, and blew very cool. On a sudden I felt such a heat and oppression from the air, as I scarcely ever experienced. I mentioned it to Lady Holdernesse, who said she was just going to take notice of it herself, as she was affected by it in the same manner. Even in that exposed situation we gasped, and were fainting

ing for breath. This strange suffocation lasted but a short time. It lightened as we came home but without any thunder, or stormy appearance. I found the same sudden heat had been very sensibly felt at the same time at Deal by several people; this was about half-past seven o'clock. This is all we have felt of the storms which have been so violent at several times in other parts of the kingdom. It was very happy for your young friend, that you had the direction of his feelings upon this occasion; it may free him from very many painful impressions of fear for some years of his life. It was to something of this kind when I was about his age, that I believe I owe my exemption from such terrors. I perfectly remember that I was exceedingly frightened at a storm of thunder; but as it was not much my fashion to express what I felt, I watched my father's looks; and the carelessness and unconcern which I discovered there *, quieted my terrors more effectually than a thousand arguments could

* Dr. Carter was a man of a remarkably strong mind. Upon another occasion when in a dreadful storm, a ball of fire (as it was called) fell close to his house, the Editor's mother, then a girl, burst into the Doctor's study, where he was quietly sitting at his books, and exclaimed, "Oh Sir! the day of judgment is come." "Well child," he replied calmly, "and when could it come at a better time for you?"

have

have done, and I do not recollect ever suffering any alarms again of the same sort.

I perfectly agree with you, that the luxury of the lower classes of people is at least equal to that of the higher ranks; but I fear the last have the additional fault to answer for, of setting the example, and giving encouragement to extravagance, by not preventing or opposing it in those over whom they have any influence. The too great carelessness about the behaviour of their servants, and the indulgence of many luxuries very improper, and very hurtful in their situation, has helped greatly to diffuse the evil. The consolidating the small farms is another cause of infinite mischief, and probably gave rise to the half-crown ordinary, at which you are so justly scandalized.

Wednesday.

I AM better than when I wrote the above four days ago, for the weather has ever since been dry, but blustering and unpleasant to a high degree. Instead of the soft airs of summer, we are rocked by the rude gales of November, and in spite of sixteen hours sun, are nearly as cold as when he only skirts the horizon. Perhaps these powerful winds may be of great use at present to supply the want of more active heat,

heat, and ripen the fruits of the earth, which God be thanked, in spite of this ungenial summer, carry a very promising appearance. I walk as much as I can, more because I think it right, than from any pleasure which the view of the country can give one in this unsummer-like weather. I have no dislike to the solemn accompaniment of clouded skies, and howling winds, with the desolated scenes of winter, but they make a very unpleasant disappointment in the expectations which one forms from the prospect of a gayer season; but we must accommodate ourselves, as well as we can to the influences of this uncertain atmosphere, and be contented to wait for health and unclouded weather, till we find it established in a region of eternal health, and ever brilliant skies. *En attendant*, amidst all the *contretems* of mortality, I am very thankful for the many blessings I enjoy, and for none more than for your affection and friendship.

I am very quiet and dull as to the folks of this world, and converse chiefly with people of other times. I have just been reading Polybius, whom I never saw till he kindly travelled down to me in the machine, I believe at the instigation of Mrs. Howe. If you have never read him, pray do, for there is such a spirit of good sense, and such a *droiture* in him, as I am sure must please

you.

you. I am going regularly through Euripides. I think the two Iphigenias are more free from comic strokes, than any of the plays which I recollect.

Pray write soon; but do not, my dear friend, add to your fatigues by writing me long letters; I shall be satisfied with one ever so short, which gives me the pleasure of knowing you are well.

I am, &c.

LETTER CVIII

Deal, *July* 19, 1768.

It gives one great pleasure, my dear friend, to hear that you are so much better, God grant it may continue, but the weather is sadly against such folks as us. We had yesterday a most direful day of rain, not to say any thing of frequent showers on most days; but one must hope for fairer days, and alleviate present sufferings by future expectations: we may yet have a clear dry autumn, to repay us for the want of summer.

It is certainly very unfair, or very absurd in Voltaire to object to Shakespear, any faults arising

ing merely from the manners of the times in which he lived. Persons of the highest rank in that age used a language as low and *grossier* in our present ideas as Shakespear. The letters of the greatest personages in the reign of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, have expressions which would hardly be tolerated in the lowest companies at present. The human heart is pretty much the same in all ages, as well as the occurrences of life, which produce its feelings; but manners perpetually vary. And Voltaire might as justly quarrel with Shakespear for not having worn the polite dress of the eighteenth century, as for not speaking its polite language. I do not mean to extend this to obscenity, which, as I think, you have very properly observed, is a failure in morality, which no custom can justify.

I have made no observations on Euripides, but such as I have occasionally mentioned to you, when we have been talking him over, or lately, just as any play has been fresh in my mind. If I understand your distinction, of which I am not quite sure, I cannot perfectly agree with you, as I think Euripides at least equal to Shakespear in expressing the sentiments of the speaker. Indeed with regard to every circumstance which concerns the tender passions, perhaps Euripides is superior to every other dramatic writer. Shake-

spear

spear is too apt to check the tear of pity, which he so well knew how to excite, by hurrying away the mind from its attention to the pathetic, with some unexpected and astonishing stroke of the sublime. Euripides had little or nothing of the wild and impetuous genius of our poet, and is usually cold and unaffecting, excepting when he touches the tender and delicate strings of the heart. His Rhesus is a strong instance of this. He never surprizes one by the vivid starts, and extravagant greatness of the impetuous passions in popular heroic character; but no author is more successful in describing the calm dignity of virtue in gentle and delicate minds. His Hippolytus, Iphigenia in Aulis, and Polyxena, are master-pieces in this kind. I do not think the comic stroke in Electra, on the cutting of Helen's hair, so exceptionable as in some other instances, as it springs so naturally from her character. Electra every where appears of a harsh and spiteful disposition, not softened but exasperated by misfortunes; and Euripides has most wonderfully supported, and given all the adjuncts of such a character, wherever he introduces her. The grief which she expresses for their losses and injuries, seems merely a subject for the indulgence of revenge on the authors of them, which, as occasion offers, either arms her hand with

with a poniard, or her tongue with railing and spiteful reflections.

Though Euripides has very seldom the power of surprizing and agitating by the starts of various passions, I recollect one striking example of this kind in the Troades. While Hecuba and the other Trojan princesses are lamenting their lost friends, and burning country, and the miserable slavery to which their Grecian lords were just going to convey them, Cassandra enters in all the transport of extravagant joy, singing an hymenæal song, and exulting on her being consigned to Agamemnon. One is scandalized, surprized and shocked at this insult on the miseries of the rest, and the unfeeling indelicacy of her own mind. Hecuba represents the impropriety of her joy. An inferior genius would have made Cassandra immediately obviate the reproach; but instead of answering, she continues her exultation, and then with a sudden and unexpected transition, explains the reason of her joy in a manner that is striking and affecting to the highest degree. Pray look over this scene, and tell me your opinion of it *.

* It was not till many years after this time that Mr. Potter published his translation of Euripides and the other Greek tragedians. Mrs. Carter thought very highly of that work.

I said

I said I had no observations to make on Euripides, and I know not how I have been scribbling about him to the extent of my paper. Happily for you the want of a frank prevents further criticism, as I have hardly room to say how very much I am yours, &c.

LETTER CIX.

Wingham, *July* 27, 1768.

I THINK myself particularly obliged to you, my dear friend, for making me happy by an account of your health, which is the intelligence in which I am most tenderly concerned, without waiting till you had time to write a longer letter. While you have so many unavoidable necessities for writing long letters on other occasions, I wish for nothing more than a short and frequent account that you are well. Any thing that you would add by taking a longer time, would certainly be an entertainment to my understanding; but this is a point about which I have always much less solicitude, than about the concerns of my heart.

I congratulate you on the success of Mr. W. Robin-

Robinson's cause. My brother, to his sorrow, has a law-suit now trying at Maidstone, but it is not an affair of property *. I am solicitous for his carrying it, as I fear if he does not, it will too naturally disgust him with an office in which I believe he is often very useful, and which he endeavours to discharge with a most conscientious application.

Probably as Mr. Montagu had strength to go through so violent an exercise, he may receive some benefit from its effects, and this fine warm weather, which always used to be so particularly favorable to him, may repair the waste of flesh and strength occasioned by his long confinement.

I have been four or five days at this place with Mrs. Cosnan, and propose to stay till Saturday, and then shall return to Deal, as I expect my father and Mrs. Douglas home from Woodchurch, where they have been staying some time

* Mr. Carter however lost it. It was an appeal against him as a magistrate, for a conviction on the game laws, and the decision at that time gave some surprize. It is a recorded case, Rogers *versus* Carter. Mr. Carter was, at his death, the oldest magistrate in the county; and had been for some years chairman of the East Kent Quarter Sessions, which he resigned after the death of his friend Sir George Oxenden. It will not disgrace that bench to say, that no man of greater abilities sat upon it, or who executed his office with a more conscientious vigilance, activity, and care.

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for change of air, and it likewise gives my father an opportunity of seeing after his parishioners. This little excursion would have been very pleasant to me, had not my head been so very troublesome, that I know not how to go through the exertion which is necessary to prevent my appearing uncomfortable and troublesome to those by whom I am treated in a kind, affectionate, and obliging manner.

This house * is in the midst of a garden, which supplies me with air and fragrance from my window; but the only shady walk in it, which is a very beautiful one, by the side of a stream, is at too great a distance for me to reach it often in the day in my present suffering state. The weather has held dry and warm for near a week, which is longer than I think it has done for the whole summer. On Monday there was, however, the interruption of a smart shower, and more thunder than we have had in this neighbourhood for the whole year. The storm was preceded by a most noble solemn sky. The rain was not sufficient to do any hurt, and I hope there is good reason to expect that the harvest from these ripening days will prove much hap-

* Wingham house, then the residence of Colonel and Mrs. Cosnan, a respectable old mansion, once a college. It is now uninhabited, and will probably be soon taken down.

pier

pier than there was before any appearance. Adieu, my dear friend, though my head will, in all probability, be always a worthless one; my heart is ever most faithfully yours, &c.

END OF VOL. I.

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